

Workplace Wellbeing and Entrepreneurship: An exploratory study of employee  
wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

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## Abstract

The wellbeing of people at work has attracted considerable media attention and growing research interest in recent times. This interest complements the separate faith in entrepreneurial organisations as catalysts of economic development. In terms of critical insights into people at work, the wellbeing literature focuses on the larger firm, while entrepreneurship studies tend to concentrate on the human capital of entrepreneur, ignoring the relationships between the entrepreneur and other people especially in small entrepreneurial organisations. Keeping this in mind, this PhD research aims to focus on exploring the wellbeing of the people within small entrepreneurial firms.

Initially, I develop a set of propositions from the existing literature to examine how wellbeing could augment human capital for entrepreneurial outcomes within small entrepreneurial firms. Bearing in mind that all human beings are different, and their interpretations are based on their own experiences and feelings; understanding individual wellbeing also needs a subjective in-depth lens. Thus, an interpretivist approach was taken to explore the wellbeing of employees working in small entrepreneurial firms using three distinct case studies based in UK. The empirical findings were thematically coded using the Gioia methodology.

The findings show that 'people-oriented' factors namely, relational assets, ownership and entitlement and the relationship with the entrepreneur together with organisational policies and procedures can have both positive influences on two types of wellbeing-hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. However, entrepreneurial capabilities and achievements could be jeopardised when dysfunctional relationships, procedures, policies and compromises with the creative process, leads to a culture of stress,

anxiety and negative wellbeing. Using the theoretical lens of Amartya's Sen's Capability Approach, I develop a more nuanced set of propositions to suggest a framework for theory-building and developing future enquiry. I outline some of the practical implications of this study for new ways in which employee-entrepreneur relationships could be organised, managed and developed through the creation of an evaluative space for realising people's capabilities and ability to function effectively as contributors to entrepreneurial firms.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

The wellbeing of working people is a significant subject and organisations have a duty of care to make sure that their employees are happy at work and that their mental health is looked after (HSE, n.d.). Researchers have proved through their studies that taking care of employees' wellbeing in turn helps to improve their productivity at work (Johnson et al., 2018; Andrei et al., 2018; Puig-Ribera et al., 2015; Robertson and Cooper, 2011; Baptiste, 2008; Hemp, 2006; Cropanzano and Wright, 2001). Therefore, there lies a growing interest from academics, organisations and policy makers in obtaining a better and deeper understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues and the factors that affect workplace wellbeing. Only with such an understanding can one arrive at the best approaches and long-term solutions to augment wellbeing at work, which will in turn help us maintain and enhance a creative and productive workforce. Before we begin understanding the practice and theoretical interests in wellbeing, it would be pertinent to share my personal interest in studying workplace wellbeing and how I started my journey.

### **1.1. Reflections: The beginning of my PhD journey**

My interest in studying workplace wellbeing came from my industry experience of working as part of a Human Resource (HR) team, for both a large as well as a small firm. While working in these organisations, I came across employees who were experiencing certain mental health issues such as stress, burnout, anxiety and depression. I also came across individuals having positive workplace wellbeing experiences owing to several factors such as organisational culture, policies and procedures, their working conditions, relationships at work and at home and many more. Being part of HR made me more accessible and approachable for employees to come forth and discuss the issues they felt were affecting their wellbeing at work. I

firmly believe that people are the most integral part of any organisation and that every employee needs to be viewed not merely as a resource or commodity, but as a significant valuable individual. Their interests, likes, dislikes, freedom and their personal identity need to be appreciated and nurtured within the organisation for which they work. Only when they feel that they are valued and respected will they go the extra mile to attain organisational goals. I understood and realised this while I was working in industry, where in one of the organisations, fostering people's needs and ambitions improved motivation, engagement as well as individual performance. Therefore, I was intrigued to learn and explore the various facets regarding people and their wellbeing at work.

My specific interest in entrepreneurial organisations was reinforced after meeting and interacting with my supervisor, Prof. Jay Mitra. His encouragement and my past industry experience led me to look at entrepreneurial firms for this PhD. My aim to provide a better understanding of workplace wellbeing became more specific in the context of small entrepreneurial organisations. Based on my experience of working with a small firm, I realised that small firms are more people focused because of the limited resources at their disposal. This increased my curiosity in exploring how the people within such firms felt at work and how they experienced wellbeing at work. At the beginning of my PhD journey, I attempted to explore the concept of workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations by engaging with academic and practitioner conceptualisations and narratives.

## **1.2. Interest in workplace wellbeing: Practical and Theoretical**

The wellbeing of people at work has dominated the headlines of numerous recent business and research publications. Studies and surveys have addressed issues of

wellbeing, happiness and mental health (see Dodd & Jack, 2017; Baird-Murray, 2017; Ahuja, 2017; Skapinker, 2016; Jacobs, 2016). The current statistics are compelling companies to look at workplace wellbeing as an urgent and important factor essential to successful business outcomes. Some recent surveys have indicated that in the UK, 70% of the workforce are unhappy in their current job role (OnePoll, 2014), one in four workers are experiencing a common mental health problem (CIPD, 2007) and one in three companies are under-performing because their employees are suffering from stress and anxiety (CIPD, 2015). This issue is turning out to be very expensive, not only on humanitarian grounds but also in terms of financial expenditure. For instance, ill health in the workforce costs the nation £9 billion annually, consequently having a massive impact on productivity (Leeming, 2016). Although these statistics and figures have been identified, there is research evidence that states that we remain unable or unwilling to address the real causes of ill-being at work (Cooper, 2013). It is indeed a challenge to tackle employee wellbeing in the context of the continuously changing work environment; where it is obvious that financial drivers are given the utmost importance. However, reports also reveal that 97 percent of companies understand that wellbeing is important for business success (Edenred, 2015), but only 50 percent of HR professionals regularly engage with their people about wellbeing (PMI Health Group, 2015) and 50 percent of working adults do not believe their company does enough for their wellbeing (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008). Major reasons why the wellbeing approaches are failing would be lack of accountability, inconsistency of approach and culture disconnect (Leeming, 2016). It is essential that wellbeing is embedded and induced into the company culture so that it becomes a way in which the organisation operates.

Nevertheless, health and wellbeing have been on the UK government's agenda since 2005, when a cross-government initiative to protect and improve the health and

wellbeing of working-age people, called 'Health, Work and Well-Being' was started by the then National Director of Health, Dame Carol Black. Subsequently, a report on how to achieve well-being in the UK workforce was published (Black, 2008) as part of this initiative. In 2010, The UK government had proposed an initiative to measure wellbeing as an indicator of the country's success in addition to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Office for National Statistics, n. d.). Another noticeable and significant initiative was the Foresight mental capital and wellbeing project, which looked at how to improve mental capital and mental wellbeing throughout life (Kirkwood et al., 2014; Dewe and Kompier, 2008). The project aimed at identifying the opportunities and challenges facing the UK over the next 20 years and beyond, the implications for every individual's mental development and mental wellbeing, and to provide directions or suggestions to individuals and businesses in order to overcome these challenges. As a result of this project, many reports have been published on the available research knowledge on wellbeing and mental capital. The government's intention was to reduce the impact of stress and low-wellbeing and to reduce the cost burden of healthcare on the economy (Kirkwood et al., 2014; Jenkins et al., 2008; Dewe and Kompier, 2008). Likewise, Waddell and Burton (2006), on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions, published a paper studying the impact of work on health and wellbeing, which formed a part of the evidence base for the Health, Work and Well-Being Strategy published in October 2005.

There are several reasons that organisations and policy makers need to invest in employees' wellbeing strategies and interventions, starting with the belief that employee performance improves when they are happy and have positive wellbeing (Johnson et al., 2018; Andrei et al., 2018; Puig-Ribera et al., 2015; Robertson and Cooper, 2011; Baptiste, 2008; Hemp, 2006; Cropanzano and Wright, 2001). Another reason is to reduce the sickness absence cost incurred by unhealthy or stressed



employees at work (Cooper and Dewe, 2008; Tehrani et al., 2007; Michie and Williams, 2003) and to fulfil their duty of care as an employer (HSE, n.d.; CIPD, 2017). A study by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2008), based on 55 case studies, suggested that organisational wellbeing interventions not only led to saving costs due to reduced sickness absence and brought down staff turnover, but also helped in revenue creation through improved employee satisfaction and performance. Above and beyond the commercial benefits for organisations, understanding and improving wellbeing at work is seen as a humanitarian approach that forms a crucial part of organisational duty of care. A humanistic management approach also perceives organisational culture as a facilitator of an individual's intrinsic worth that supports them in enhancing and flourishing not only within the organisation but also as individuals (Pless et al., 2012; Maak and Pless, 2009). Here, employee wellbeing or societal wellbeing as a whole is considered as a business outcome different from profit or monetary gains, where the focus is on maximising the wellbeing of employees rather than just the profits of the organisations (Pirson and von Kimakowitz, 2014). As outlined, wellbeing has been considered not only through government initiatives and projects, but also through academic research, as will be explained further.

From a theoretical background, wellbeing has originated from psychological research since the beginning of positive psychology; which marked the shift from focusing on research on how to cope with negative attributes such as stress, depression or anxiety to more positive experiences such as happiness, flourishing or growing (Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi, 2000). Academics from organisational studies adopted this approach, due to which positive organisational behaviour (POB) (Luthans, 2002) and positive organisational scholarship (POS) (Cameron et al., 2003) research traditions came into existence. Psychological abilities and strengths such as self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism (Luthans et al., 2007) were studied by POB researchers and they claimed that these qualities could be developed to improve performance at work.

On the other hand, POS researchers focused on processes of positive human functioning, such as excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, and growth (Cameron et al., 2003). Research on wellbeing in terms of employee engagement and job satisfaction (Fisher, 2010; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000) and stress (Dewe et al., 2012; Folkman, 2011) has been carried out for decades and therefore, wellbeing is not a novel concept.

The wellbeing of individuals has always been of critical interest to researchers and academics in the organisational psychology field. Dewe and colleagues (2012) suggested that wellbeing is an important aspect of an individual's experience and how they operate at work. Therefore, if high or unrealistic demands are put on an employee's mind and body, this could result in high stress levels, low wellbeing or even physically detrimental health issues (Bakker and Demerouti, 2018; Mette et al., 2018; Lazarus, 1991; Karasek, 1979). On the other hand, if the employees have adequate resources to cope with such demands, they may grow, flourish and thrive within their workplace or experience high levels of positive wellbeing (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2010; Hakanen and Roodt, 2010; Hakanen et al., 2005). Howell et al. (2016) makes the case that wellbeing acts as a natural motivator, improves physical health and longevity and promotes positive relationships, which can act as a catalyst for success for the organisation, and in turn, the economy.

### **1.3. Small entrepreneurial organisations and workplace wellbeing**

Although there seems to be high interest in wellbeing among both professional and academic circles, the understanding of employee wellbeing in small organisations is still to be explored. There exists a gap in the wellbeing literature where small firms are not given as much importance as large organisations, especially because small organisations are considered to have several resource constraints, especially in

finance, which is seen as a possible downfall when it comes to investing for wellbeing at work (Rucker, 2017; Cooper, 2013; Rowden, 2002).

Small firms have been playing an increasingly important role in the world economy (Rowden, 2002; Acs and Audretsch, 1988) and are critical to the wellbeing of the UK economy. As per Hughes (2001), UK SMEs appear to be relatively more innovative than the larger firms when compared to the European context. In the UK, the economy remains dominated by large organisations despite the importance of small entrepreneurial organisations in economic activity (Hughes, 2001). Workers in small businesses generally indicate higher job satisfaction than those in large organisations (Rowden, 2002). A recent report by the Octopus Group (2018) 'shows that high-growth small businesses create 20 per cent of jobs and add 22 per cent of gross value added, driving increased productivity'. Research has shown evidence and explanations for innovation and how smaller firms have advantages over larger ones (Mitra, 2013; Acs and Audretsch, 2005; Audretsch, 2004; Scherer, 1980). One such explanation could be the more flexible and flatter organisational structure where there is less bureaucracy compared to the large organisations, where every decision needs several approvals before implementation (Vossen, 1998). A smaller decision-making team is more favourable for innovation within firms (Mitra, 2013; Vossen, 1998; Acs and Audretsch, 1988). Being a small team, such firms tend to focus more on behavioural characteristics such as having a motivated and committed workforce with effective and rapid internal communication and the ability to learn quickly and adapt routines and strategies (Rothwell and Dodgson, 1994; Vossen, 1998). Therefore, there is a need to explore the wellbeing of the people working in such small entrepreneurial firms, as this is an existing gap in the entrepreneurship literature.

The literature on entrepreneurial and innovative organisations (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) refers to the need for shared vision, the importance of creativity, autonomy and self-efficacy; but these are directed towards the locus of control of the entrepreneur (Mitra, 2017; Audretsch, 2012; Muzyka et al., 1995). The concept of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2017) extending the resource-based view of the firm (Penrose, 1959; Barney, 2001) focuses on the abilities to introduce new or re-shape the firm's existing resources and routines in the image and vision of its entrepreneur(s) and, in some cases, the management team (Zahra et al., 2006; Arthurs and Busenitz, 2006; Zahra and Filatotchev, 2004). We appear to know less about the dynamics of interactions between the entrepreneur(s) and the rest of the team, who collectively help to establish entrepreneurial organisations. Continuous, adrenalin-fuelled environments may not be conducive to creative, innovative outcomes and the wellbeing of both the entrepreneurs and other team members. The likelihood of individuals not being able to achieve their aspirational goals, which can both offer support for the entrepreneur and generate alternate innovative ideas, may hamper the development of such organisations.

This study attempts to explore the answers to the following questions: Is the culture within small entrepreneurial organisations linked to how wellbeing is experienced within such firms? What are the factors that affect employee wellbeing in an entrepreneurial organisation? How and why are they important? How does the need to start, grow and sustain an entrepreneurial organisation affect employee wellbeing at work? These questions are answered by exploring and understanding individual experiences and numerous facets of workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

#### **1.4. Structure of the thesis**

To commence this study a detailed literature review is presented in Chapter Two, which explains and highlights the abovementioned gaps in current wellbeing and entrepreneurship research and how the present thesis adds to advancing knowledge in these areas. As such, Chapter 2 is divided into two main sections. The first section outlines the development of the wellbeing concept from stress research to current POB research, before describing the two wellbeing research traditions of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. The second section gives an overview of existing research on small entrepreneurial organisations by reviewing the different views and conceptualisations within the discipline. This chapter moves on to discussing the existing literature in entrepreneurship research, which deals with wellbeing issues and locating this study amid the existing literature. This chapter concludes with the conceptual framework and three propositions that are interlinked with the research questions, which summarise my understanding of the literature on workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

Chapter Three presents a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology followed for gathering, evaluating, presenting and analysing the data so as to achieve the objectives of the study. To understand and explore individual experiences and perception, this study adopts an interpretivist viewpoint. Interpretivists believe that the multiple realities exist due to distinct and different interpretations of social actors in different contexts, and hence reality is subjective to the person interpreting it (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). This study is informed by the interpretivist paradigm accounting for multiple socially constructed, subjective realities (ontological position) and studying employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations. This study originates from the assumptions that individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals make their own subjective perceptions and meanings of their

experiences and this influences their behaviour. These experiences and interpretations are unique and diverse, which enables the researcher to understand and gauge the complexity of viewpoints instead of narrowing these meanings into limited ideas. The researcher's goal is to focus primarily on the informant's interpretations of the situation, context or aspect being studied. Therefore, the questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a condition that they generally would not discuss while interacting with others. Therefore, a qualitative case study approach seemed apt for this study, wherein three small entrepreneurial organisations based in the UK were involved. Face-to-face interviews together with observation techniques were used to understand the contextual factors that impact on peoples' aspirations and their alignment with the vision and style of the entrepreneur. I further use a data analysis technique known as the Gioia Methodology (2013), which is an advanced version of Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory analysis, that is, coding the data using 1<sup>st</sup> order codes, 2<sup>nd</sup> order codes and aggregate themes to show a rigorous and systematic data analysis process.

The commonality between all three case studies was that they belong to the category of small entrepreneurial organisations, however they were diverse with respect to the nature of their business. Case study I is a social enterprise based in London, developing customised training modules for organisations to help understand employee mental health and wellbeing related problems in the workplace. Case study II is a community-based network firm, a public house based in Colchester town. Case study III is a hi-tech firm based in Essex, working on high-end technological devices for calibration purposes. Since all the three organisations were small entrepreneurial firms, we found many common sub-themes that talk about the same aggregate theme but in a different context with a unique perspective. Moreover, there exist cross-overs

and overlaps between the sub-themes, as many of these factors are co-related and inter-linked, as per the participant's understanding of them and as per their individual interpretation and meanings. The empirical evidence suggests the existence of three main themes; the people, the creative process and the organisational structure, policies and procedures around which employee wellbeing in all three case study organisations plays up. These main influences or factors had a significant relationship to the wellbeing of employees working in small entrepreneurial organisations. In each case, the sub-themes varied, and the impact that these sub-themes had on the wellbeing of employees also varied from case to case.

These empirical findings are discussed in depth in Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four provides a case-by-case background and overview of the three case study organisations. This helps us to understand the distinct and diverse nature and facets of the three organisations in this study. Furthermore, this chapter talks about the structure within the organisations, the organisational policies and procedures, what they do to grow and develop their organisational effectiveness and how the organisation views workplace wellbeing. This background is followed by the coding structure derived from the face-to-face in-depth personal interviews conducted in each organisation. The first and the second order codes in these three coding structures have various similarities and differences, but they all amalgamate into the same aggregate themes across the three case studies. For instance, communication was an important factor in relation to wellbeing in all three cases, but every participant's experiences and meanings were distinct. Thus, even though this code merged into the same aggregate theme – that is, the people – it has different explanations and perceptions. These differences and similarities have been portrayed and discussed in Chapter Five. This chapter gives an in-depth view about employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations through the eyes of the participants, experiencing and

making sense of the whats, hows, whens and whys of their feelings about their wellbeing while working in a small entrepreneurial firm.

As discussed above, the wellbeing literature has not empirically or conceptually studied small entrepreneurial organisations. Generally, the wellbeing literature deals with large organisations or corporations that have the ability and resources to invest in workplace wellbeing initiatives or policies. Similarly, the entrepreneurship literature is yet to explore the wellbeing aspect of the people working in entrepreneurial organisations with a focus on small organisations. Chapter Six discusses the limitations of the existing theories and models, and then explores Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach to analyse the findings and theoretically elucidate them. By operating at a more fundamental analytical level, Sen's Capabilities Approach is able to encompass potentially all of the elements we might wish to consider in any analysis of wellbeing. Using Sen's Capabilities Approach to assess wellbeing means that it is not necessary to ally oneself to one particular set of values, and this can be left open to a certain extent. A detailed discussion and analysis of the findings using Sen's Capabilities Approach to wellbeing can be found in Chapter Six.

This study makes certain critical contributions to the field of entrepreneurship and wellbeing. Considering this thesis is multi-disciplinary, there are multiple contributions made to enrich the existing knowledge of workplace wellbeing in the entrepreneurship literature. The framework, which explains workplace wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations using Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach, is a novel and fresh perspective on this topic. Policy makers within governmental and educational institutions might consider promoting alternative approaches to innovation management that place greater emphasis on the role of wellbeing in sustaining a new form of entrepreneurial ecology. This research has implications for the study of



entrepreneurial organisations, particularly the nature and scope of relationships between employees and the entrepreneurs in small entrepreneurial organisations. However, there are certain limitations of this study which pave the path for a future research agenda on the topic of workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations. Chapter Seven provides a detailed discussion of the theoretical contributions, implications, limitations and future research agenda. It also provides a reflection on this PhD journey before sharing some final thoughts.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

*“A good literature review does not include everything that has been found; it is selective, only presenting in discussion work that is relevant to the research itself.” - Chris Hart, 2018*

### **2.1. Introduction**

This thesis attempts to explore the different experiences of wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations. As part of this process of exploration, I have selected relevant literature that helps to discuss and provide a rationale for this study (Hart, 2018). By doing so, the study contributes to two research arenas, namely the workplace wellbeing and the entrepreneurship literature. First, the research aims to extend the current debate in workplace wellbeing literature by introducing a context-specific study on entrepreneurial organisations where employee wellbeing is studied and explored, specifically within small entrepreneurial organisations. Second, this thesis makes a significant contribution to the field of entrepreneurship, where workplace wellbeing is a new construct and has been understudied and underexplored.

#### *Structure of the Chapter*

The chapter provides an outline of the relevant, existing literature and the current gaps that this study aims to fill. To begin with, we need to review the existing workplace wellbeing literature to understand the wellbeing constructs and the existing debate in the field. This is followed by a critical review of the various conceptualisations of small entrepreneurial organisations and their characteristics and drivers, and where and how the wellbeing of employees in such organisations could have implications for their

future development. Once we have a clear idea of these concepts and the existing literature thereon, we move on to obtaining a thorough understanding of the possible relationship between workplace wellbeing and small entrepreneurial organisations.

The review generates a set of key research questions. I also use a set of propositions to develop the logic of my understanding of the key issues and concepts of wellbeing and their application in the context of small entrepreneurial firms. Propositions in this case help us understand the common ground, propositional attitudes and the perceptual experiences (King, 2014) of people in the context of small entrepreneurial firms.

## **2.2. Wellbeing at work: Review and Conceptualisation**

This thesis aims to explore workplace wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations and therefore, we need to understand the ongoing research into which components of workplace wellbeing can (Fisher, 2010) and should (Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009) be incorporated in particular contexts. Some of the key categories found in the search of the literature were: Personal attitudes and job satisfaction, personal traits and measurements of wellbeing, studies showing links between perceived wellbeing and work characteristics of individuals who work in specific firms, descriptions and reviews of wellbeing models and measurements within the organisations, together with approaches to promoting and sustaining health and wellbeing at work.

Most studies appear to focus on wellbeing measures that are based on conceptualisations of (i) positive or negative wellbeing, for instance job satisfaction or absence of stress); (ii) hedonic or eudaimonic wellbeing, for instance personal growth

at work, autonomy or happiness); (iii) other aspects ranging from one facet of wellbeing experience such as affect to several dimensions of psychological wellbeing; (iv) wellbeing in a specific context (for instance, work satisfaction or satisfaction based on a specific factor such as pay or benefits) and (v) studies where antecedents and components are included in the measure (for instance, the Ryff scales of psychological wellbeing (Ryff, 1995; Seifert, 2005)).

Debate among researchers and practitioners persists as to which components are dominant and necessary features to separate wellbeing from other forms of workplace experience, such as stress, which have been thought to be connected to the wellbeing construct (Fisher, 2010). Additionally, different theoretical approaches to the concept of wellbeing (such as hedonic and eudaimonic understanding) lead to a wealth of definitions of workplace wellbeing.

In terms of antecedents of workplace wellbeing, the role of individuals in shaping their work experience appears to be of increasing importance (Daniels, 2011; Daniels et al., 2013). One area of study that considers the role of the individual explores personal resources in addition to job resources as antecedents of wellbeing (Hobfoll, 2002; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). It is said that personal resources might be able to moderate the effect of job demands on wellbeing and independently from that lead directly to wellbeing, for example satisfying human needs such as autonomy (see Hakanen and Roodt, 2010). However, conceptual and empirical research is still needed to further explore which resources of individuals are relevant with regard to affecting the wellbeing experience at work.

### **2.2.1. Meaning of individual's wellbeing at work**

This section reviews the current understanding of the components of employee wellbeing at work or workplace wellbeing to grasp the development and evolution of the concept of wellbeing and the two research traditions (hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing) that have emerged over the years. The first part describes how wellbeing is conceptualised in positive organisational behaviour (POB) research and discusses how the stress literature adds to the understanding of the wellbeing concept. In the second part, I describe and explain the two research traditions of hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, the third part enlists various definitions of workplace wellbeing and the fourth part discusses the existing research in conceptualising and operationalising the wellbeing concept.

#### **2.2.1.1. Concept of wellbeing: Evolution from Stress to POB research**

As the name suggests, the positive psychology movement has drawn attention to the positive perspectives on work experiences. POB and POS (perceived organisational support) stem from positive psychology theories (Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi, 2000). Positive psychology states that a shift in psychology research is needed away from the focus on the negative and from a field that studies only diseases and malfunction. Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi (2000) argue that what they add to psychology research differs from previous research, since positive psychology focuses on the neglected area of positive experiences and functioning.

The fields of POB and POS emphasise the importance of focusing on positive experiences to study what good work means, how employees can flourish at work, and how to obtain higher job performance (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2008). POB researches human strengths and capacities such as psychological capital (PsyCap) that include the dimensions of optimism, hope, resilience, and self-efficacy (Luthans

et al., 2007). These lead to work satisfaction and enhanced performance of the individual in the workplace, as found by Luthans and colleagues (2007). POS, a similar field to POB, studies concepts such as resilience and associated outcomes such as growth of individuals (Cameron and Dutton, 2003).

The field of positive psychology and its conjunct disciplines are not without criticism. Lazarus (2002, 2003) denies that positive work experiences have been ignored in past stress research; instead, he argues, positive experiences are actually studied at the expense of negative experiences. Further critics of positive psychology state that the field overemphasises positive emotions or states and might in fact lead to low wellbeing. The imperative to experience and express positive emotions (Held, 2004) can lead to feelings of guilt or dysfunctional responses if they are not experienced all the time (Fineman, 2006; Wilson, 2009). Fineman (2006) argues that the separation of negative and positive aspects of work experiences undermines the attempt to capture the richness and complexity of experiencing wellbeing at work. POB and POS scholars, however, argue that increased attention to the positive has been undertaken in order to achieve a balance in research work experience, as most research has put the emphasis on the negative (Cameron et al., 2003).

In their discussion on integrating stress into wellbeing research, Dewe et al. (2012) state that a balanced approach is needed in order to obtain a critical understanding of the subject. A balanced approach would imply that stress and wellbeing are given the same priority in research, and that these research fields are integrated, because both focus on the same work experience. From this perspective, stress focuses on negative antecedents and outcomes and wellbeing focuses on positive antecedents and outcomes. Indeed, more scholars in positive psychology, POB, and POS affirm that

both negative and positive states should be researched to understand the complete experience rather than just one side (Aspinwall and Staudinger, 2003; Seligman and Pawelski, 2003; Lopez et al., 2018). Another downside to POB and POS research is that individuals fall into a situation where every negative emotion is perceived as a problem when the focus only on positive emotional experiences as a measure of a good life (King, 2001). It is possible that negative emotions can lead to a reordering of feelings, emotions and thought processes in work.

An example of a balanced approach from POB is provided by Simmons and Nelson's (2007) holistic stress model. They state that their model "answers the call for the more balanced view of human behaviour that POB must supply in order to be credible" (Simmons and Nelson, 2007, p. 42). They call their model holistic as it includes positive and negative responses to stressors. Distress is the negative response to a stimulus, ending in experienced strain. Eustress is the positive response to a stimulus, ending in experiencing a positive challenge (Seyle, 1975).

Stress researchers can also be called to take a more balanced approach. Indeed, Dewe et al. (2012) argue that wellbeing research is an extension of stress research. They state that in the past, the work experience of wellbeing was studied through a negative lens of stress (such as coping with stressors, experiencing strain) while contemporary research increasingly focuses on positive aspects such as satisfaction, engagement and flourishing (Dewe et al., 2012). Certainly, stress research has paid a lot of attention to identifying and mitigating adverse experiences at work. Workplace stress research started in the late 1970s and was used in public discourse, governmental agency publications, and academic literature to explain negative experiences at work (Wainwright and Calnon, 2012). After substantial progress was

made in understanding negative experiences at work, interest shifted to wellbeing, making sense of positive experiences at work (Dewe et al., 2012). In relation to this, Folkman (2011) points out that stress research started by establishing the harmful effects of stress, before moving on to coping processes, in the sense of regulating negative emotions and distress, and then on to building resilience.

### ***Hedonic Wellbeing***

In 1984, Diener introduced the concept of hedonic wellbeing, focusing on the identification of positive experiences, that is, positive affect and life satisfaction. One could argue that stress and hedonic wellbeing have a strong link on a broader level (Daniels, 2011). Hedonic wellbeing focuses on positive affective experiences. Stress relates to negative affective experiences. However, it is also debatable whether positive and negative affect are true opposites (Tellegen, 1985) or indeed distinct constructs (Cacioppo and Berntson, 1999; Russell and Carroll, 1999). I argue that we need to study wellbeing and understand the individual's subjective perceptions about wellbeing at work in a holistic and balanced manner by acknowledging the existence of both positive and negative wellbeing experiences.

### ***The Normative Approach to Wellbeing***

Wellbeing research moved further in 2000 when the focus shifted from the presence or absence of negative experiences to enabling situations without adversity in positive psychology. Thus, the 'average person' (Sheldon and King, 2011, p. 216) was studied rather than impaired individuals: "It is becoming increasingly clear that the normal functioning of human beings cannot be accounted for within purely negative (or problem-focused) frames of reference". This is the research focus of positive psychology, POB, and POS. Most enquiry focuses on 'normal', i.e. non-threatening,



conditions. Positive psychology is the “scientific study of ordinary human strengths and virtues” (Sheldon and King, 2011, p. 216) and focuses on average individuals and how they can flourish.

However, it is important not to isolate stress issues and POB research from one another or to focus only on POB conceptualisations of wellbeing: “...just as studying dysfunction cannot tell researchers how to promote flourishing, studying flourishing cannot tell us how to improve or prevent suffering” (McNulty and Fincham, 2012, p. 107). Also, stress researchers who explore the concept of distress would argue that a certain level of stress is needed for an individual to experience self-development and to flourish through challenges. As Simmons and Nelson (2007) state, if stress does not go beyond an individual’s coping ability, it can act as a mediator for flourishing.

### ***Eudaimonic Wellbeing***

Eudaimonic wellbeing adds to the debate around wellbeing and stress, since it is a further development beyond hedonic wellbeing, in the sense that it moves beyond the presence or absence of pleasure and explores optimal function in terms of self-development and experiencing meaning and purpose (Ryan and Deci, 2001). This has implications for which predictors and resources, in particular, are examined in wellbeing research. These would include resources that facilitate coping and also those that help individuals to ‘grow’ in non-threatening conditions.

To summarise, both stress and wellbeing research investigate an individual’s experience of work using different outcome measures. Stress is based on stressor-strain theories that look mainly at adverse outcomes, such as distress. Wellbeing

research measures outcomes as positive functioning. Whether wellbeing and stress are different or the same on a broad level cannot be answered definitively, as hedonic and eudaimonic conceptualisations of wellbeing would be linked to stress differently owing to their different perspectives on what it means to be well and ultimately what constitutes positive experiences and a good life (Ryan and Deci, 2001; Deci and Ryan 2008).

Therefore, there are two questions to be looked at when establishing what constitutes wellbeing. First, and in line with what has been referred to already, there is the need for the development of conceptualisations of this phenomenon in the research fields of stress and POB, and their focus on different predictors and outcomes of this experience. Second, it is necessary to identify the key components of this concept. This study explores both the positive aspects of wellbeing as well as negative wellbeing experiences such as stress.

## **2.2.2. Hedonic and Eudaimonic: two research traditions of wellbeing**

### **2.2.2.1. The concept of hedonic wellbeing**

The hedonic conceptualisation of wellbeing understands it as an experience of happiness, satisfaction, and avoidance of pain (Kahnemann et al., 1999). Diener is a key theorist in hedonic wellbeing. In Diener's (1984) definition, hedonic wellbeing has a cognitive and emotional component and can be measured by looking at long-term levels of affect (pleasant and unpleasant) and life satisfaction. These are not present states but the long-term experience of happiness and satisfaction, measured by the relative frequency of positive affect episodes experienced over several years, and an appraisal of one's life (Diener, 1994). The three dimensions of pleasant affect (i.e. positive affect), unpleasant affect (i.e. negative affect), and life satisfaction are distinct

but correlate with each other (Diener et al., 1999). However, Busseri and Sadava (2011) state that the actual structure and interrelationships of the three dimensions remain inconclusive.

Diener (1994) states that if a researcher wants to assess wellbeing at work, job satisfaction might be a more sensitive measure than a general hedonic wellbeing scale because it is more domain-specific. Extensive research has been carried out on job satisfaction (Brief and Weiss, 2002). From such work, one can distinguish between general, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Intrinsic job satisfaction includes features inherent to conducting the work, such as the level of task variety, while extrinsic satisfaction is based on the context of the work, such as satisfaction with pay (Spector, 1985, 1997). The relation of job satisfaction to hedonic wellbeing is that by indicating whether they experience desirable characteristics of the job, individuals demonstrate their satisfaction.

A definition of hedonic workplace wellbeing that considers affect in particular is the concept developed by Warr (1990, 2003), who states that there are two principal axes along which workplace wellbeing can be described: pleasure and arousal. Based on these axes, three key indicators of affective wellbeing exist: (1) displeasure–pleasure, (2) anxiety–comfort, (3) depression–enthusiasm. Different variations of the hedonic workplace wellbeing concept exist. For example, Mäkikangas and colleagues (2007) suggest a four-factor structure, including only the latter two axes, based on data from a longitudinal study. In contrast, Daniels (2000) extended the concept of affective wellbeing as he found empirical support that indeed five key indicators best capture hedonic wellbeing at work in terms of affect. These are: (1) depression–pleasure, (2)

anxiety–comfort (3) boredom–enthusiasm, (4) tiredness–vigour, and (5) angriness–placidity.

#### **2.2.2.2. The concept of eudaimonic wellbeing**

The “eudaimonic approach to wellbeing focuses on meaning and self-realization and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning” (Ryan and Deci, 2001, p. 141). This approach stems from Aristotle’s work on eudaimonia, which states that real happiness can only be achieved when one identifies and develops one’s virtues and lives in accordance to them (Charles, 1999; Scott, 1999; Franklin, 2010).

Similar concepts of psychology that are based on eudaimonia include the fully-functioning person (Rogers, 1961), self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954), Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory (SDT), and Ryff and Singer’s (1995) positive health concept. SDT is often used in current research to explore antecedents and factors of eudaimonic wellbeing. SDT states that people have three psychological needs that motivate self-determined behaviour, which Ryan and colleagues (2008) argue to be antecedents of wellbeing. They are competence, autonomy, and psychological relatedness. A commonly used eudaimonic wellbeing concept is Ryff’s (1989) psychological wellbeing. The dimensions of her eudaimonic wellbeing construct are (1) purpose in life, (2) environmental mastery, (3) positive relationships, (4) autonomy, (5) personal growth, and (6) self-acceptance. She builds the concept of eudaimonic wellbeing based on the research on positive psychological functioning (that is, self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968); fully functioning person (Rogers, 1961); formulation of individuation (Jung, 1933); and conception of maturity (Allport, 1961); as cited in Ryff, 1989, p. 1070).

Diener and Biswas-Diener (2009; as cited in Diener et al., 2009, p. 263) also developed a brief 8-item scale (psychological wellbeing scale) to measure eudaimonic wellbeing including the dimensions of meaning and purpose, supportive and rewarding relationships, being engaged and interested, contributing to the wellbeing of others, competency, self-acceptance, optimism, and being respected.

In relation to workplace wellbeing, Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2012) found that the eudaimonic aspect of wellbeing was emphasised most when people described what it meant for them to experience wellbeing at work. Few studies use eudaimonic wellbeing indicators in the context of work however, as most use hedonic measures (Fisher, 2010). One example of a study that included hedonic and eudaimonic measures of wellbeing and was set in the workplace was conducted by Ménard and Brunet (2011), using Ryff's (1998) scale to investigate the link between authenticity at work and wellbeing. They found that cognitive and behavioural components of authenticity at work explained a significant proportion of variance in each hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing index, and that authenticity was positively associated with wellbeing at work.

### **2.2.2.3. The association between hedonic and eudaimonic concepts**

Hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing seem to be distinct research traditions, but they do not have to be mutually exclusive (Kashdan et al., 2008). Waterman and colleagues (2008) found that the concepts are interrelated but empirically and theoretically distinct. They suggest that if a person experiences eudaimonic living, they will necessarily also experience hedonic enjoyment; but, not all hedonic enjoyment is derived from eudaimonic living (Deci and Ryan, 2008). McMahan and Estes (2011)

support this claim. They asked people to describe the components of wellbeing. Based on an inductive study on these perspectives, they found the following wellbeing components: experience of pleasure, avoidance of negative experience, self-development, and contribution to others. The first two components align with the hedonic conceptualisation of wellbeing, while the latter two are consistent with a eudaimonic perspective. Such findings suggest that wellbeing may consist of both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions. This corresponds to the notion proposed by Ryan and Deci (2001), who emphasise that wellbeing is multifaceted in terms of including hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of the experience. They argued that a broader measure is useful to capture subtleties of the experience. For example, in moments of transition in self-development or learning, one might experience low hedonic wellbeing but high eudaimonic wellbeing.

By simply trying to capture the wellbeing experience with hedonic measures, one might conclude that the person is experiencing low wellbeing. Indeed, one could argue that they are in fact experiencing high wellbeing in a different quality of the experience. Therefore, we will be exploring wellbeing from both angles and taking a holistic and balanced approach in understanding workplace wellbeing.

### **2.2.3. Definitions of wellbeing at work / workplace wellbeing**

In organisational psychology some researchers argue that wellbeing measures should be broad enough to fully assess an individual's experience of wellbeing (Fisher, 2010; Vella-Brodrick et al., 2009) and concise enough to have predictive utility for outcomes such as work performance (Daniels and Harris, 2000). However, many measures of individual workplace wellbeing focus on single aspects of the construct and are typically based on the hedonic notion of wellbeing (Fisher, 2010; Page and Vella-

Brodrick, 2009). As outlined in the above section, these are, for example, job satisfaction (Spector, 1987), affective workplace wellbeing (Warr, 2003), and vigour at work (Shirom, 2011).

However, in recent years additional definitions of workplace wellbeing have been developed that expand the concept beyond hedonic aspects. In addition, some definitions also use a mixture of domains. Danna and Griffin (1999), for example, use a mixture of domains and components for their definition of workplace wellbeing and state that the construct consists of life/non-work satisfaction, work/job-related satisfaction, and mental and physical health in the workplace. The domains they refer to are work life and non-work life. The components they use are hedonic wellbeing (satisfaction) and health. Further examples are displayed in Table 1 (such as Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009; Cartwright and Cooper, 2009; 2014).

The field can be described as diverse but not unified, as different aspects of the concept are emphasised in the definitions. Such heterogeneity is illustrated in Table 1, which displays some individual workplace wellbeing definitions that are commonly cited in wellbeing research. Most measures focus on hedonic aspects of wellbeing: Two out of the six measures include the eudaimonic aspect. The most common dimensions assessed are affect and satisfaction, with some measures assessing both and others assessing only one of the two.

Table 1: Selection of workplace wellbeing definitions

<b>Selection of workplace wellbeing definitions</b>			
<b>Definitional elements relate to the following wellbeing concepts</b>			
<b>Author</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Hedonic</b>	<b>Eudaimonic</b>
Wright and Cropanzano, 2009	Psychological wellbeing	Positive affect, negative affect, global evaluation	
Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009	Employee health	Life satisfaction, dispositional affect, job satisfaction, work-related affect	Psychological wellbeing
Sirgy, 2006	Employee wellbeing	Life satisfaction, job satisfaction, happiness	
Danna and Griffin, 1999	Wellbeing in the workplace	Life/non-work satisfaction, work/job-related satisfaction, [health in the workplace (mental and physical)]	
Warr, 2003	Workplace wellbeing	Three key indicators of affect: displeasure–pleasure, anxiety–comfort, depression–enthusiasm	
Daniels, 2000	Affective wellbeing at work	Five key indicators of affect: (1) depression–pleasure, (2) anxiety–comfort (3) boredom–enthusiasm, (4) tiredness–vigour, and (5) angeriness–being placid	
Cartwright and Cooper, 2009; 2014	Psychological wellbeing	Affect	Purpose
Ryff, 1989	Psychological wellbeing		(1) purpose in life, (2) environmental mastery, (3) positive relationships, (4) autonomy, (5) personal growth, (6) self-acceptance



Through growing interest in eudaimonic aspects of work wellbeing, more research is being conducted on concepts such as meaning of work, thriving, and flourishing (Kopperud and Vitterso, 2008; Ménard and Brunet, 2011; Rosso et al., 2010). In addition, workplace wellbeing concepts that could be seen as referring to aspects of hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, for example flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1992) and work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2009; Bakker et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2002) also receive widespread research attention.

To summarise, there is diversity and a lack of unity regarding the conceptualisation of wellbeing as outlined in Table 1, due to a focus on negative or positive aspects of this work experience (negative versus positive affect in Warr's definition); the inclusion of only one or both aspects of hedonic and eudaimonia (Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009; Cartwright and Cooper, 2014; 2009); and inclusion of concepts related to wellbeing (mental health and physical health in Danna and Griffin 1999; Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009).

However distinct or broad the definition may be, all term their concepts 'wellbeing'. A broad conceptualisation highlights the complexity of the concept. Indeed, it has been debated whether wellbeing is a distinct construct or an umbrella term (Xanthopoulou, Bakker and Ilies, 2012) or area of study (Daniels, 2011) encompassing constructs that relate to positive experience and functioning. Fisher (2010) refers to a family of wellbeing concepts that includes job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement, engagement, thriving, vigour, flow, and affect. The constructs capture different aspects of wellbeing by focusing on either cognition or affect and have a broad or distinct target, such as work in general or a particular work event.

Diener et al. (1999) give a reason for this continuing debate about what wellbeing encompasses. Several phenomena are involved when defining wellbeing, as individuals assess different life facets when assessing their wellbeing, such as job satisfaction, self-development, and experiencing happy moments. One approach to capture which components are involved in workplace wellbeing experience is to ask people what they see as being part of their wellbeing experience. In my study, the participants were asked about their perception of wellbeing and which factors, according to them, affected their wellbeing at work.

#### **2.2.4. Measuring wellbeing at work**

Warr (2012) outlines several issues that should be addressed when conceptualising and operationalising the wellbeing construct. He notes that psychologists focus on psychological aspects of the wellbeing concept but that the physiological and social aspects also play a role in the wellbeing experience. Depending on the research question, these two aspects might be useful to integrate when measuring wellbeing. Danna and Griffin (1999), for example, integrate health and wellbeing into their concept of wellbeing in the workplace, and Keyes' (1998) work recognises the social aspects of wellbeing: "Although the existing models emphasise private features of wellbeing, individuals remain embedded in social structures and communities, and face countless social tasks and challenges" (p. 123). For Keyes, wellbeing goes beyond individual aspects of positive functioning and includes appraisals of one's functioning in society. He identified five dimensions of social wellbeing: feeling part of the community (integration); understanding and caring about one's surroundings (coherence); feeling positive towards others (acceptance); feeling one has something to offer (contribution); and feeling confident about the future in one's society (actualisation).

The scope of measurement also determines how wellbeing is conceptualised and measured. One can measure context-free wellbeing (life satisfaction), domain-specific wellbeing (for instance job satisfaction), or facet-specific wellbeing (such as satisfaction with pay). In addition to the scope of the wellbeing concept, Warr (2012) also comments on the positive and negative emphasis of the concept. When intending to measure wellbeing, one has to decide how wide a range of elements one wishes to measure in a wellbeing concept and whether it is advantageous to one's research question to combine positive and negative components of wellbeing or measure them separately to enable comparative analysis. Measuring a wider range of wellbeing components would also allow examining ambivalence in the wellbeing experience. A person can feel good in certain respects and bad in others; he or she can experience negative affect but also a sense of self-development.

Dewe and Cooper (2012) argue that capturing the complexity also described by Warr (2012) calls for more innovative methods. Diener (1994) also argues that a wider array of measures should be used to capture (hedonic) wellbeing as affect includes facial, physiological, motivational, behavioural, and cognitive components. Diener and colleagues (2010), for example, suggest considering the following methods beyond self-report measures for measuring hedonic wellbeing: (1) recording nonverbal behaviour; (2) reports by significant others; (3) measurement of hormones and other physiological indices; (4) cognitive measures such as depth of processing; (5) behavioural information; (6) in-depth interviews; (7) mood sensitive tasks; and (8) choice as a reflection of life satisfaction.

Another way to capture the experience of wellbeing is to ask people to state for themselves their level of wellbeing and ask them to describe (based on their

experience rather than on wellbeing theories) on what they base this assessment. Inducting components of wellbeing based on descriptions of the experience of wellbeing can give insights into relevant components of workplace wellbeing. These so-called lay descriptions of wellbeing are deemed important because they have implications for how one's own wellbeing, as well as that of others, is judged, and how attempts are made to achieve wellbeing (McMahan and Estes, 2011). How people try to achieve wellbeing has been found to have an effect on their hedonic wellbeing. Engaging in activities that provide meaning and feelings of engagement contributed more to the experience of hedonic wellbeing than engaging in activities that provide pleasure (Vella-Brodrick et al., 2009).

In addition, as wellbeing research has used mainly self-report measures, some researchers have investigated how these measures might differ from others' (that is observers) ratings of an individual's wellbeing (Sandvik et al., 2009). Some studies have explored lay descriptions of wellbeing to explore what component of the concept is deemed important by people to their experience of wellbeing. A study by Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2011) looked at whether a definition derived from their inductive research had similarities with existing (theoretical) wellbeing definitions. They also wished to find out to what extent hedonic and eudaimonic components are both part of experiencing wellbeing. To do so, they created an inductive model of workplace wellbeing from descriptions of working people and created a questionnaire based on the components identified. This study revealed a five-factor model consisting of interpersonal fit at work (experiencing positive relationships); thriving at work ("accomplishing a significant and interesting job that allows one to fulfil oneself as an individual", Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie, 2011, p. 670); feeling of competency at work ("possessing necessary aptitudes to do job efficiently", Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie, 2011, p. 670); perceived recognition at work (feeling appreciated in terms of

one's work and as an individual); and desire for involvement at work (involvement of oneself in an organisation to contribute to its functioning and success). Factor analyses also revealed that the five dimensions are related and belong to a higher order construct, which the authors called psychological wellbeing at work. The five factors are solely related to eudaimonic wellbeing, but the authors argue that, at the item level, hedonic wellbeing in terms of job satisfaction and positive affect is included. Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2011) therefore deduce that, from a worker's perspective, the eudaimonic sense of wellbeing is strong. They state in their study that positive emotions and satisfaction result from eudaimonic manifestations of wellbeing. They acknowledge, however, that longitudinal studies would be needed to be sure of the direction of causality.

The aim of McMahan and Estes' study (2011) was also to determine components of general wellbeing based on lay conceptions. Another aim of their study was to research lay perceptions of wellbeing to provide insights into relevant factors impacting on wellbeing. They identified four factors: avoidance of negative experience, experience of pleasure (arguably a hedonic wellbeing component), contribution to the wellbeing of others, and self-development (arguably a eudaimonic wellbeing component).

Sastre's (1999) study on lay descriptions of wellbeing aimed to find out how individuals assess their own and others' wellbeing. Their approach was to determine which factors are mentioned by people as antecedents of wellbeing. A similar study had been conducted previously by Ryff (1989), who aimed to determine antecedents of positive functioning. These approaches define wellbeing not through its components, but through its antecedents. Sastre (1999, p. 209) asked 490 participants the question,

“What does wellbeing mean to you?” Drawing on research literature, she formed (a priori) coding categories based on the domain of wellbeing (physical, family, friends, work, money, leisure, personal, and spiritual) and personal dimensions of wellbeing (acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, mastery, purpose, and growth). The four most mentioned categories (acceptance of the relationships one has with one’s family, accepting relationships one has with friends, accepting one’s work, and accepting one’s body) were put into one personal dimension, acceptance. The most frequent domains referred to were therefore family, friends, work, and the physical domain. Individuals’ answers were matched to theory-derived categories (deductive, top-down approach). Inductively derived categories might have provided a different picture.

Another study that aimed to capture lay descriptions of wellbeing was conducted by Delle Fave and colleagues (2011). This study also aimed to compare national levels of wellbeing, experienced meaning, and life satisfaction. Delle Fave and colleagues (2011) stated that ‘happiness’ and ‘wellbeing’ are used interchangeably. In popular literature, the term wellbeing is often substituted with the term happiness. However, the academic literature does not use the terminology hedonic happiness or eudaimonic happiness. Happiness is mostly associated with the concept of hedonic wellbeing and in particular its dimensions of positive affect (feeling happy) and life satisfaction. Therefore, only limited conclusions about the components of wellbeing can be made from this study.

Delle Fave and colleagues (2011) take a similar approach to Sastre (1999) and divide the components of a definition of wellbeing into domain-related and so-called psychological components, which refer to the content of the wellbeing experience. The

major components relating to the content of the wellbeing experience were named as harmony and balance (inner peace, self-acceptance, serenity, feeling of balance, evenness) and emotions (positive emotions). Here again hedonic (such as positive emotions) and eudaimonic (for instance self-acceptance) aspects were mentioned together; the latter more than the former, even though the term happiness was used in the instructions. The majority of participants stated that wellbeing was mostly experienced in the domains of family and relationships in general.

The similarities of the described studies are that people include (different interpretations of) hedonic and eudaimonic aspects in their descriptions and ratings of wellbeing components. The ostensible divide between eudaimonic and hedonic wellbeing in the literature (Kashdan et al., 2008) does not appear to be found in people's experience of wellbeing. Both are experienced and are seen as important. What is also important is the context in which these experiences occur and I turn my attention to this next.

#### **2.2.4.1. Contexts of Wellbeing**

That various studies revealed different components of wellbeing might be due to them taking place in different contexts with different participants from different occupations. The context in which questions about the components of wellbeing are asked might have an impact on what components are highlighted. A specific situation might be contextualised through experiences of negative emotions and therefore aspects of wellbeing that evolve around feeling positive emotions or harmony might be highlighted. Different components might also be described if respondents are asked to provide a general description, or to describe components that are frequently experienced in a specific context, such as being at work.

The studies of Sastre (1999), Delle Fave and colleagues (2011), and McMahan and Estes (2011) have a similar context as they asked for a description or rating of wellbeing in general. Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2011), however, asked for a specific situation at work. These studies are differentiated further by the samples they use, in terms of gender, nationality, age, and occupation. These demographic characteristics can also have an impact on how wellbeing is understood and experienced (Pugliesi, 1995; Delle Fave et al., 1999; Oishi et al., 2013; Ryff, 1995; Langan-Fox and Cooper, 2011). Most of these studies focus on large organisations in both the public and private sectors (Robertson and Cooper, 2011). So far, the context of small entrepreneurial organisations has been neglected by the wellbeing researchers. Although some workplace wellbeing (deductive) approaches such as the asset model do acknowledge the role of six essential factors (resources and communication, control, balanced workload, job security and change, work relationships and job conditions) that are required for positive wellbeing at work (Johnson et al., 2018; Robertson and Cooper, 2011; Johnson, 2009), they are extremely restrictive and prescriptive when it comes to understanding wellbeing experiences of individuals at work.

Based on these studies, several aspects for researching workplace wellbeing could be explored further. First of all, I would argue that a truly inductive approach might allow components to emerge from lay descriptions of wellbeing experiences, rather than using measurement or coding schemes based on theoretical definitions of wellbeing. Wellbeing is not only subjective in terms of rating how well one is (Diener, 1994) but also, for example, is highly subjective in terms of what constitutes wellbeing. One can say one is well because one experiences pleasure. However, for others a life with wellbeing might be more about engagement and fulfilment (see also Vella-



Brodrick et al., 2009). King and Nappa (1998) suggest that one's own conceptualisations of wellbeing influence the interpretation of the existence or absence of the wellbeing of others. However, different people might have different concepts of what it means to have wellbeing. If the judgment of wellbeing of others is based on one's own wellbeing conceptualisation, this might lead to misevaluations.

Secondly, an inductive approach within a specific context will help us obtain a fine-grained picture of how wellbeing is experienced in such contexts. This might help to gain a richer picture of how wellbeing manifests in terms of different categories and components at work. Asking people to describe indicators of their wellbeing experience with open questions that do not cue them for particular components of wellbeing or definitions of wellbeing would enable identification of what prevalent components of workplace wellbeing might be. In addition, rather than correlating scales based on lay perceptions of wellbeing with standard wellbeing measures and testing whether there is alignment, one could check whether the theoretical definitions on which the measures are based align with descriptions of wellbeing experiences. The components that emerged from descriptions of wellbeing experiences could be compared to components that are part of theoretical wellbeing definitions. Based on these findings, one would be able to deduce whether the wellbeing components referred to in existing (theoretical wellbeing) scales map on to the components that are contained in descriptions of the experience of wellbeing.

Several quantitative studies have been conducted in certain occupations to identify the specific stressors (see Langan-Fox and Cooper, 2011) and in terms of wellbeing, to understand what impacts the wellbeing in large organisations (see Juniper et al., 2011). Several wellbeing theories such as the holistic model of Eustress-Distress

(Simmons and Nelson, 2007), Asset model of employee wellbeing (Johnson, 2008), stress related model (Karasek, 1979) and job demand-control-support model (Theorell and Karasek, 1996) are still being used to understand the antecedents of wellbeing at work. However, I am focusing more on a free-flowing subjective view of wellbeing and attempting to explore the factors influencing employees' wellbeing in the context of small entrepreneurial organisations.

### **2.2.5. Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach to Wellbeing**

Since the above approaches and models do not help us capture the free-flowing subjective view of wellbeing, we could look at Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1993; 1997), which is concerned with the promotion of human development, agency and freedom. The economist and philosopher Amartya Sen pioneered the Capabilities Approach due to his keen interest in promoting human development, agency and freedom. The 'Capabilities Approach' (CA) offers a philosophical alternative to the resource-based theories and the utilitarianism theories that support how 'development' is understood (Miles, 2014; Alkire, 2005, 2008; Clark, 2008; Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2009; Robeyns, 2005). According to Sen (1999), development involves allowing people to have the freedom to make choices and giving them the opportunity to exercise their own agency. The approach therefore focuses on the freedom or the capabilities of individuals to choose a life they value (Sen, 1999).

The core concepts of 'functionings', 'capability' and 'agency' are used in the capabilities approach to determine people's wellbeing. Functionings are the various outcomes an individual may achieve (being healthy, having shelter, having a good job, participating in social activities, travelling, voting in an election), while capabilities refer to real (as opposed to formal) freedoms and opportunities to achieve these outcomes

(the opportunity to be healthy, the opportunity to travel, the freedom to participate in society) (Sen, 1999). The distinction is between achievements, on the one hand, and freedoms or valuable options from which one can choose on the other (Robeyns, 2005).

Other theories of development such as utilitarianism are criticised because people's actual needs are not reflected accurately if we rely on mental state as a measure of development (Miles, 2014). People stop desiring what they can never expect to achieve when they come to terms with their current circumstances, which Sen (1999) refers to as 'adaptive preferences'. Therefore, wellbeing assessments based on mental states are inadequate until they consider the mental state in correspondence with their actual condition in life (Miles, 2014). On the other hand, models that look at equal distribution of goods (such as Rawl's Theory of Justice) are also criticised because they neglect the fact that every person is different, and that people differ in their ability to translate the given resources into activities they value (Sen, 1999). Therefore, we cannot look at resources and assess wellbeing without understanding how well people are able to function with the resources they have at their disposal in specific circumstances. We also need to understand the relationships between various factors/elements that may hinder or stand in the way of people and their opportunity to function.

The freedom to choose what functionings they wish to achieve indicates that they have the 'Capability' (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1997). This also means that they have access to resources, including the possibility of enhancing their human capital; and agency (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1997) to achieve their functionings in the organisation. The core concepts of 'functionings', 'capability' and 'agency' are used in CA to determine

people's wellbeing. According to Amartya Sen, "the *capability* of a person reflects the alternative combinations of functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection." (Sen, 2008, p.271). Functionings are various 'doings and beings' and can range from quite basic things such as being adequately nourished to more complex functionings such as achieving self-respect (Sen, 2008 p. 271). The key distinction between *functioning* and *capability* is the ability and freedom to choose a particular functioning. Capability therefore represents the various combinations of beings and doings that a person can choose as opposed to one specific functioning. This has the important consequence of capability including the full range of options for a particular functioning rather than just one version of it. Freedom to choose between different functions is important for Amartya Sen, but so too is the range of functions from which we can choose. He argues that it would be odd to evaluate an individual's freedom without considering the value of the choices available to them. Amartya Sen also distinguishes between wellbeing and a person achieving their life goals or their agency and following this distinction he identifies four areas of evaluation; wellbeing achievement, agency achievement, wellbeing freedom and agency freedom.

Although these categories are analytically distinct, in reality they may or may not converge depending on the context. He gives the example of fasting versus starving as an illustrative example; we may wish to address the latter but not the former. Both could be viewed as a lack of wellbeing achievement but fasting would not necessarily be regarded as impinging on wellbeing freedom, agency freedom, or agency achievement, whereas starvation may well do. This is because when a person starves he/she does not have the agency to exercise choice to function and achieve any form of satisfaction of particular needs. By way of contrast, a person chooses to fast and, therefore, exercises agency to make that choice. He/she is capable of making such a choice. If we were to take this example a little further and assume that the starving

person had spent all their money at a casino the night before, in that case they seem to have agency and wellbeing, freedom (until very recently at least) and can be said to have achieved their aim of going to the casino and betting their money. Consequently he/she is not necessarily any worse off than the person fasting. This is not necessarily a problem for Amartya Sen, as he is happy to concede that his approach is just a useful evaluative approach for assessing capabilities rather than a value framework for judging which specific functionings or capabilities we should be fostering.

Sen's open approach distinguishes him from Nussbaum (2011), who has a different version of CA. Nussbaum (2001) frames basic principles of this approach in terms of ten capabilities, which are the real opportunities based on personal and social circumstances of individuals. This approach has been criticised recently by James (2018) who states that this view is a very reductionist approach to the human condition. On the other hand, Sen does not give a specific list of capabilities because he argues that a definite list would be too difficult to define because the context of the use of capabilities needs to be acknowledged in the process (Nussbaum, 2011).

Leaving values undefined in this way means that the CA is vulnerable to the same criticisms made of utilitarianism and other subjective accounts of wellbeing that leave it up to the individual to define their version of the good life (Gasper, 2007, p. 53-4). However, I think this misrepresents what Amartya Sen intends, namely that the capability approach provides an evaluative framework that can be used alongside different accounts of wellbeing, which could equally be either subjective or objective accounts, but are not limited to either. By operating at a more fundamental analytical level, Amartya Sen's capabilities approach can encompass potentially all of the

elements we might wish to consider in any analysis of wellbeing. Using Sen's capabilities approach to assess wellbeing means that it is not necessary to ally oneself to one particular set of values, and this can be left open to a certain extent.

Amartya Sen's explanation of functioning could also be associated with the eudaimonic approach to wellbeing, which focuses on meaning and self-realisation and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Additionally, wellbeing research where one area of study considers the role of the individual explores personal resources in addition to job resources as antecedents of wellbeing (Hobfoll, 2002; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007) and states that personal resources could moderate the effect of job demands on wellbeing and independently from that lead directly to wellbeing, for example satisfying human needs such as autonomy (see Hakanen and Roodt, 2010). We could link these personal resources to the capabilities (in Sen's approach) and achieving positive wellbeing through autonomy.

As per Sen's approach, agency is a person's ability to pursue and realise the goals they value or have reason to value. An agent, in Amartya Sen's terms, is a person who 'acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives' (Sen, 1999 p. 19). The capability approach provides an evaluative framework that can be used alongside different accounts of wellbeing, which could equally be subjective or objective accounts, but are not limited to either. Using Amartya Sen's capabilities approach to assess wellbeing means that it is not necessary to ally oneself to one particular set of values, and this can be left open to a certain extent.

The key thing to note about Amartya Sen's Capabilities approach is that he is concerned with trying to offer an evaluative space for understanding and constructing wellbeing rather than defining it. If we wish to try to define wellbeing, then we could argue that Amartya Sen's approach is not much use. However, since there already exists a range of different conceptions and theoretical approaches to wellbeing, none of which are in general agreement, this might not be as unacceptable as it seems at first glance. We can still attempt to set out a definition of wellbeing and apply it but simply acknowledge that it is not final, and this need not weaken such a definition, since the same could be argued of other accounts. Given that any assessment of wellbeing will be undertaken in a specific context and that we wish to retain some flexibility in any definition of wellbeing, this approach might be useful for this study.

#### **2.2.6. Summary**

This section has reviewed the academic literature on components of workplace wellbeing. I argue that research on stress that preceded wellbeing research was expanded into considering positive aspects of stress (eustress research; see Simmons and Nelson, 2007) and into wellbeing research with concepts that are more than the opposite of stress (introduction of eudaimonic wellbeing concept). Wellbeing is a combination of feeling good and functioning well in terms of growth, for example (Huppert, 2009).

Workplace wellbeing can be seen as an overarching term that incorporates different aspects characterised by positive and negative experiences. I would argue that workplace wellbeing is a complex experience with many facets, as studies based on lay descriptions of the wellbeing experience indicate. It can be argued that lay descriptions can give insights into components of wellbeing deemed important by

people. Although there seems to be high interest in wellbeing within both professional and academic circles, the understanding of employee wellbeing in small organisations remains to be explored.

There exists a contextual gap in the wellbeing literature where small firms are not given as much importance as large organisations, especially because small organisations are considered to have several resource constraints, especially in finance, which is seen as a possible downfall when it comes to investing for wellbeing at work (Rucker, 2017; Cooper, 2013; Rowden, 2002). Most workplace wellbeing studies have focused their attention on large organisations (Dewe and Cooper, 2008; Cooper, 2007).

While small firms can provide an adequate context of study, my interest is in entrepreneurial small firms; that is firms that are identified for their capacity to develop new products and services, create employment, adopt novel organisational forms and structures, and be seen to be innovative in all these forms (Audretsch, 2004; 1995; Tidd et al., 2013; Westland, 2016; Mitra, 2013; 2017; Miller and Friesen, 1982; Krishnan and Prahalad, 2008). The public attention that has been given in recent times to both the high growth potential of these firms together with the egregious negative behaviour towards both employees and customers of many of the super driver entrepreneurs of change, provides sufficient reason for a study of wellbeing in these firms specifically. To the best of my knowledge, no clear capture of wellbeing in such firms has actually occurred in the research domain. Part of the reason is also the dearth of studies in employee-entrepreneur relationships and a view of the entrepreneurial firm as the creative platform for all those who work in them. These issues are picked up later in the review of the literature below on entrepreneurial firms. Therefore, this study takes an inductive approach to explore workplace wellbeing



within small entrepreneurial organisations by including the lay descriptions and subjective views of the participants in understanding and experiencing wellbeing at work.

### **2.3. Small Entrepreneurial Organisations: Review and Conceptualisation**

In the mid-1970s, the role of small firms was beginning to gain legitimacy because the economy was starting to reveal signs that technological development was not always confined to large organisations (Cornelius et al., 2006). Cornelius and colleagues (2006) mention that this appraisal of small firms was triggered by the twin oil crises that hit the economy, leaving many large organisations in severe financial instability, resulting in unemployment in western countries. Additionally, large companies were increasingly seen as inflexible and slow to adjust to new market conditions and embrace breakthrough innovations. These changes together with the strengthening of global competition, the rise in the degree of uncertainty in global markets, larger market fragmentation and the change in characteristic of technological progress, have all led to greater interest in smaller firms (Carlsson, 1992).

David Birch (1979) found that in the United States, it was not the large organisations that were creating the majority of employment opportunities, it was the small and young firms. Small firms have been playing an increasingly important role in the world economy (Rowden, 2002; Acs and Audretsch, 1988) and are critical to the wellbeing of most economies. As per Hughes (2001), UK SMEs appear to be relatively more innovative than larger firms in comparison to their European counterparts. However, in the UK, the economy remains dominated by large organisations despite the importance of small entrepreneurial organisations in economic activity (Hughes, 2001). Workers in small businesses generally indicate higher job satisfaction than

those in large organisations (Rowden, 2002). A recent report by the Octopus Group (Salter, 2018) 'shows that high-growth small businesses create 20 per cent of jobs and add 22 per cent of gross value added, driving increased productivity'.

The higher growth prospects of small firms are the reason why the entrepreneurial character of small firms has attracted attention in research, policy and practitioner circles. Against the usual scenario of low small firm survival rates, resource constraints, and isomorphism, entrepreneurial small firms have carved out a niche in terms of their contribution to the economy. They have done so because they were entrepreneurial; which means that the firm needs to be seen to be accomplishing important economic impact in terms of sales, profit growth and employment (Bhide, 2008). As per Carland and colleagues (2007) a small, entrepreneurial firm needs to engage in at least one of Schumpeter's four categories of behaviour; that is, introduction of new goods, introduction of new methods of production, opening of new markets or industrial reorganisation.

According to several studies, the importance of having a lead entrepreneur, building a team with complementary skills, generating an idea for a product or service, a well-developed business plan, a network of people and resources and funding, were the main elements of a successful venture creation (Timmons, 1994). However, we cannot ignore uncertainty and risk as factors in a possible failure. Consequently, most of the young and small firms make efforts to stabilise their activity, for example engaging in strategic planning which is no longer the privilege of bigger organisations (Papp, 2006; Szabó, 2005; Nagy, 1996).

Recent entrepreneurship research has shown evidence and explanations for innovation and how smaller firms have advantages over larger ones (Mitra, 2013; Acs and Audretsch, 2005; Audretsch, 2004). One such explanation could be the more flexible and flatter organisational structure, where there exists less bureaucracy compared to the large organisations, where every decision needs several approvals before implementation (Vossen, 1998). A smaller decision-making team is more favourable for innovation within firms (Mitra, 2013; Vossen, 1998; Acs and Audretsch, 1988). Being a small team, such firms tend to focus more on behavioural characteristics such as having a motivated and committed workforce with effective and rapid internal communication, and the ability to learn quickly and adapt routines and strategies (Rothwell and Dodgson, 1994; Vossen, 1998).

Smaller, entrepreneurial firms are more likely to be innovative than their larger counterparts because of their flexibility, closeness to the entrepreneur, and changing technologies (OECD, 2010, Acs & Audretsch, 2005), although their ability to maintain their entrepreneurial capabilities has been questioned (OECD, 2010). The size, type and the contexts of entrepreneurial organisations define their entrepreneurial capabilities as evinced in their distinctive motives, missions and values (Mitra, 2013; Audretsch, 1995; Cohen and Klepper, 1992).

Smaller organisations tend to have more behavioural advantages that depend on resources such as flexibility to adapt to changing market demands and adopt the latest innovations (Mitra, 2013). Internal management structures also add to the advantage of smaller organisations since they are less bureaucratic, and therefore, it is argued that smaller organisations are better able to harness the culture of innovation because they tend to have smaller decision-making teams (Mitra, 2013). Smaller organisations

tend to have smaller knowledge tanks and human capital. To overcome these issues, smaller organisations lean towards networks, collaborations and knowledge transfer routines to improve their innovative capabilities and competitive edge (Rogers, 2004; Zahra et al., 2006; von Hippel, 1988).

Even though small organisations are seen as having great potential, there are some pressing issues such as access to finance, and the availability of other resources such as qualified human capital (Mitra, 2013). The issue of attracting and retaining human capital might be overcome by understanding what affects the wellbeing of employees working in small organisations and then harnessing the factors that have a positive effect on workplace wellbeing.

### **2.3.1. Small Entrepreneurial Organisations: Definitions and Conceptualisation**

Many studies have differentiated small business firms from entrepreneurial firms, and one such explanation of the difference was given by Carland et al. (1984: 358),

*“A small business venture is any business that is independently owned and operated, not dominant in its field, and does not engage in any new marketing or innovative practices. An entrepreneurial venture is one that engages in at least one of Schumpeter's four categories of behaviour: that is, the principal goals of an entrepreneurial venture are profitability and growth and the business is characterized by innovative strategic practices.”*

Additionally, they suggest that small business owners/managers do not display as much innovative behaviour and strategic management practices as do entrepreneurs. However, Carland's definition was criticised by Chell and colleagues (1991), who pointed out several pitfalls, and consequently, they suggested defining the

characteristics of an entrepreneur such as opportunistic, innovative, creative, imaginative, idea-people, proactive and agents of change, which could be used to differentiate them from owners/managers. Gartner (1988) also strongly contested Carland's views and proposed a behavioural approach, with specific focus on new venture creation.

Another characteristic of small entrepreneurial businesses is their growth orientation through innovation. This evolving characteristic changes over the firm's life cycle (Chell et al., 1991; Hardyman et al., 2001). This happens because the firm might choose stability over growth after a certain period of development, which would result in less or no innovation at all. Kourilsky (1980) described owners/managers as having an entrepreneurial spirit if they demonstrated future orientation. An entrepreneur must be engaged in an activity by being opportunistic and aiming at innovating new products, services or processes.

A highly influential and iconic definition of entrepreneurship was given by Schumpeter (1934), where he stressed innovation as a key factor in the development of the firm as well as the economy. He suggested five categories of innovation – 1. developing new products/services, 2. developing new methods of production, 3. identifying new markets, 4. discovering new sources of supply and 5. developing new organisational forms.

Following Schumpeter, Penrose (1959) stated that identifying and exploiting opportunistic ideas (new product development, changes in technology, acquisition of new managerial personnel, changes in a firm's administrative organisation, new

approaches to raising capital and novel methods for expansion) for growth and development of small enterprises is the essential aspect of entrepreneurship.

### ***The Small Firm Entrepreneur***

Many researchers (Silver, 1983; Gilad, 1984; Gartner, 1985; Long and Ohtani, 1986; Chell et al., 1991) supported this theme of entrepreneurship as 'being opportunistic'. For instance, Kirzner (1982) characterised the entrepreneur as an individual who seeks and identifies profit opportunities. Olson (1986) defined entrepreneurs as decision makers who recognise and exploit opportunities using either the market-pull or technology-push arrangements. In a study of entrepreneurial behaviour, it was seen that entrepreneurs responded positively to uncertainty, risk-taking behaviour, autonomy, change and social dexterity. However, they reacted negatively to conformity, interpersonal affect and harm avoidance (Sexton and Bowman 1985). Sexton and Bowman also found that the risk-bearing trait was the main distinguishing aspect between managers and entrepreneurs; and the risk-bearing attitude was accompanied by change as an inevitable consequence.

The above review of some definitions and features of small business owners/managers and entrepreneurs helps us to differentiate them using the following characteristics. Firstly, they exhibit innovative capabilities, which means they create new products, services or processes, and generate innovative ideas and suggest new ways of making their organisations work, exploring new markets, venturing into new projects and discovering new sources of supplies. These innovative ideas can be ground-breaking, original and creative. Second, small business entrepreneurs are strategic and insightful in decision making, analysing long-term implications, focusing on futuristic market growth, sales and profits, being able to view things in a wider long-

term perspective. This view runs contrary to the received wisdom on small firms as being short-term oriented organisations because of their need to survive given limited resources. Third, they are opportunistic in the way that they are constantly looking for prospects, developing and enhancing their networks, being flexible in order to seize the opportunity, being alert as well as proactive to any change in the market or environment and seizing and exploiting all possible profit opportunities. Fourth, small business entrepreneurs tend to exhibit a risk-taking trait and are flexible to change. They also tend to adapt quickly to change, which is profitable for the business. In a nutshell, small business owners/managers might be considered entrepreneurial if the above four characteristics are displayed in their activities.

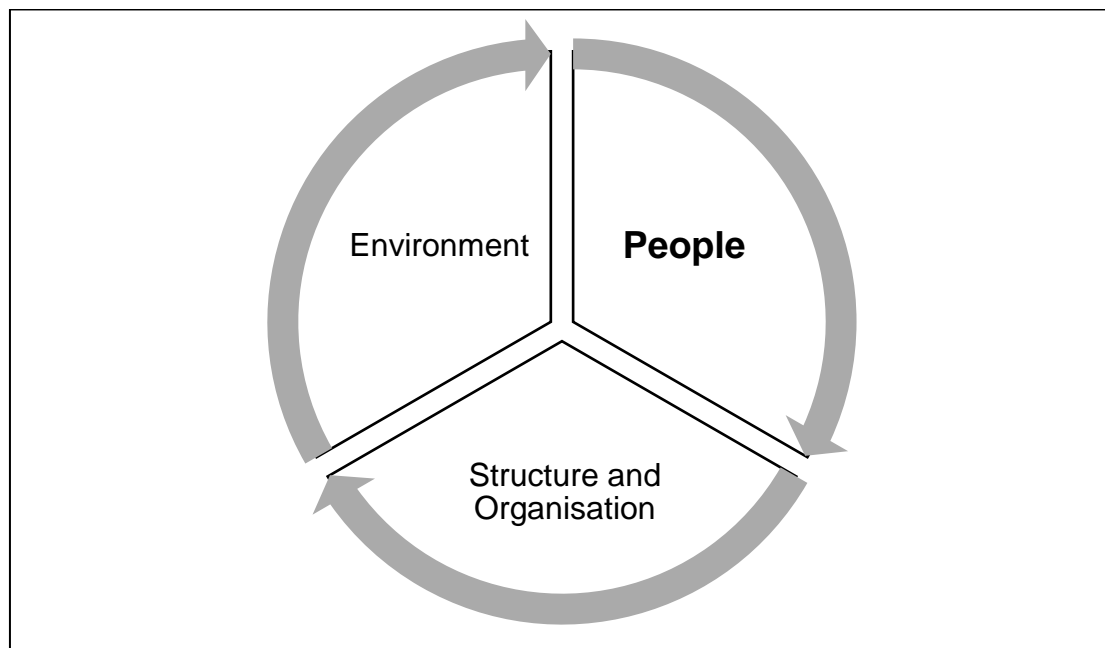
### ***Components of Small Entrepreneurial Organisations***

We have established that small entrepreneurial organisations are innovative by nature and Tidd et al. (2013) suggest that the innovative organisation has an *“integrated set of components that work together to create and reinforce the kind of environment which enables innovation to flourish”* (p. 101, 2013 edition). Their work identifies seven components of innovative organisations, namely shared vision, appropriate structure, key individuals, effective team working, high-involvement innovation, creative climate and external focus.

However, Mitra (2013) advances the view of entrepreneurship in an organisational context, by taking a holistic approach that includes a nexus of people (vision, leadership and teams), structure and organisation (organisational design, team working, high involvement) and environment (internal culture and external focus) (Mitra, 2013). This view is useful because it gives us a scope to include various factors under each component after understanding the size and type of the entrepreneurial

organisation and the industry in which it functions. This also advances Gartner's view of entrepreneurship, where he talks about the various characteristics of entrepreneurial organisations. These components help us understand how the people within the organisation, the organisational structures, environment and processes help in defining the organisational culture and routines that enable innovation. Figure 1 below shows a simple diagrammatic formulation of the components and their interrelationship. We use this understanding of the components of entrepreneurial organisations in this thesis to explore the people aspect of entrepreneurial organisations. To better understand the human side of entrepreneurship, we need to understand the role of people in small entrepreneurial firms.

Figure 1: Components of Small Entrepreneurial Firms



Adapted from: \* Mitra (2013); Tidd et al. (2013); Simon (2009); Westland (2008); Prahalad and Krishnan (2008) Kim and Maurbogne (2005); Galbraith (2004); Muzyka (1999);



### 2.3.2. Role of People in Small Entrepreneurial Organisations

Every entrepreneurial venture starts small and for its survival and growth, varied skills and competencies are essential. One such skill is managing people and using practices that support high performance (Cooper and Burke, 2011). Small firms do not use policies and procedures in the management of their people in as structured a way as do large firms (Kotey and Folker, 2007; Kotey and Slade, 2005). However, small firms do use some standard human resource management (HRM) practices such as recruiting, training, motivating and compensation (Tocher and Rutherford, 2009). Studies have shown that the use of HRM policies and practices tends to improve employee performance to a great extent (Hayton, 2003) and faster-growing small firms made greater use of such practices (Carlson et al., 2006).

Studies also suggest that entrepreneurs in small firms are more satisfied (Hundley, 2001) because of greater autonomy and control, less bureaucracy, more diverse challenges at work and personal relationships with employees (Tsai et al., 2007). Reflecting on this we could suggest that the entrepreneur would therefore understand the benefit of attributes such as autonomy, flexibility and personal relationships at work, which would probably have an influence on how people feel at work.

One of the studies revealed a positive relationship between four job characteristics (autonomy, variety, task identity and feedback) and job satisfaction among people working in SMEs (Schjoedt, 2009). Over two decades of studies, especially in large companies, reveal that it is critical to understand and view employees and organisational culture, as doing so can act as an important factor in gaining a competitive advantage (Katzenbach, 2000; Ulrich, 1987). One might argue that people and culture are likely even more important to the success of small firms, considering

that small firms do not have the capacity and slack to retain employees and practices that do not contribute to performance. Therefore, they cannot afford to underutilise their human resources, and have to rely on employees for learning, innovation and creativity, all of which are important in developing and sustaining entrepreneurial characteristics (Schumpeter, 1934; Chell et al., 1991). For small firms, people are extremely important, particularly because of the scarcity of resources.

These observations on small entrepreneurial firms and the characteristics of the entrepreneur inform this study in terms of development of the context in which wellbeing is examined. Throughout the study, references to small businesses, small organisations or small firms are synonymous with small entrepreneurial firms, unless otherwise mentioned.

### **2.3.3. Workplace Wellbeing in Small Entrepreneurial Organisations**

From the above discussion, we could argue that people are the most important factor in small firms and that good HRM practices and policies might be an antecedent to the experience of positive wellbeing emotions (such as happiness, satisfaction, engagement, motivation) among employees in small firms. The association between employee wellbeing and successful organisations is well documented and analysed in the management literature.

Considering the vast amount of research in this field, studies have revealed links between psychological wellbeing (PWB) and a wide range of significant organisational outcomes such as productivity (see Robertson and Cooper, 2011), job performance, employee engagement and job satisfaction (see Wright and Cropanzano, 2000; Hartell

et al., 2003). Howell et al. (2016) make the case that wellbeing acts as a natural motivator, improves physical health and longevity and also promotes positive relationships. Improving wellbeing may also act as a catalyst for success for the organisation and this in turn could contribute positively to the economy (Howell et al., 2016). Investing in ways to improve employee wellbeing is also considered to be relatively easy and economical. In a fraught and highly competitive environment, organisations have begun using the wellbeing concept to gain a competitive advantage by proposing that along with profits and financial returns on investment, employees' wellbeing should play a significant role in understanding the health of an organisation (Raya and Panneerselvam, 2013).

The wellbeing construct emerges as a representation of organisational innovation, and the identification and realisation of opportunity becomes part of the organisation's entrepreneurial management process. This idea is the basis of the first proposition drawn from the literature.

*Proposition 1 (P1): Workplace wellbeing in a small entrepreneurial organisation is not only a critical parameter to be included while determining the organisational success but also makes the business more sustainable for future growth;*

*Proposition 2 (P2): Small Entrepreneurial organisations are better able to improve performance by understanding what augments and hampers workplace wellbeing, in order to have sustainable innovative growth in a highly productive environment;*

Even though there is evidence suggesting benefits of using policies and practices, entrepreneurs sometimes fail to see the importance of sound HRM practices or they lack the time, patience and skills to fully employ them. These practices might help motivate their employees as well as attract new talent (Cooper and Burke, 2011). Small and medium-sized firms are facing significant challenges, which include shortage of skilled employees, high levels of absenteeism, high turnover and low employee growth (Cooper and Burke, 2011). One possible reason for all of this might be the deficit of wellbeing among the employees in small firms. Studies have revealed that continuous focus on innovation, fast-paced work, reduced person-to-person interaction and nudging employees to take initiatives and learn more skills can create a stressful environment (DeJoy et al., 2010, Farrell and Geist-Martin, 2005, Sparks et al., 2001, Raya and Panneerselvam, 2013), which in turn affects employees' wellbeing and the establishment of a healthy organisation. Innovative, hi-tech, competitive culture might also have a dark and dysfunctional side (Goldman, 2008). A recent HBR study presented that culture and values within an organisation is considered to be the most vital aspect among the workforce (Chamberlain, 2017).

Factors such as organisational cultural, job security, workload, rewards and recognition have an influence on workplace wellbeing (Peterson and Wilson, 2002; 1998). These issues raise questions and propositions about how small entrepreneurial organisations can navigate the waters of wellbeing to sustain innovation in healthy environments. Small entrepreneurial organisations are innovative organisations who develop and implement specific strategies in order to adapt and lead in competitive and changing environments (Mitra, 2013; Chell et al., 1991). These organisations need creative people to drive innovation in such ever-changing contexts. I therefore propose:

*Proposition 3 (P3): Dysfunctional (small) entrepreneurial organisations breed a culture of stress, anxiety and negative wellbeing which over time can adversely impact sustainability and growth.*

***What is known and what is less known?***

Even where there appears to be a clear understanding of the characteristics and drivers of entrepreneurial organisations, less is known about the relationship between workplace wellbeing and the entrepreneurial objectives or outcomes of these organisations. The literature on entrepreneurial and innovative organisations (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) refers to the need for shared vision, the importance of creativity, autonomy and self-efficacy; but the literature is directed towards the locus of control of the entrepreneur (Mitra, 2017; Audretsch, 2012; Muzyka et al., 1995).

The concept of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2017) extending the resource-based view of the firm (Penrose, 1959; Barney, 2001) focuses on the ability to introduce new resources and routines or re-shape the firm's existing resources and routines in the image and vision of its entrepreneur(s) and, in some cases, the management team (Zahra et al., 2006; Arthurs and Busenitz, 2006; Zahra and Filatotchev, 2004). We appear to know less about the dynamics of interactions between the entrepreneur(s) and the rest of the team of people, who together help to establish entrepreneurial organisations. Continuous, adrenalin-fuelled environments may not be conducive to creative, innovative outcomes and the wellbeing of both the entrepreneurs and other team members. The likelihood of individuals not being able to achieve their aspirational goals, which can both offer support for the entrepreneur and generate alternative innovative ideas, may hamper the development of such organisations.

Although much is known about the significance of wellbeing to organisational success, there is a dearth of knowledge about the differentiated impact of wellbeing on entrepreneurial organisations. One may be cognisant of the typical measures used to measure entrepreneurial success, such as entrepreneurial orientation (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996, Covin and Wales, 2012, Covin et al., 2006, Stam and Elfring, 2008, Anderson et al., 2015), entrepreneurial behaviour and outcomes (de Vries, 2001), but there is a lack of clarity over their association or correlation with wellbeing. Even if there appears to be a critical understanding of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial success, entrepreneurial intentions (Shinnar et al., 2012), motivations, leadership (Ripoll et al., 2010, Renko et al., 2015), behaviour (Jong et al., 2015) and a social cognitive perspective (Hmieleski and Baron, 2009), at the level of individual entrepreneurs, and at the micro-contextual level (Shane et al., 2003; Hayton, 2005; Avlonitis and Salavou, 2007; Baron, 2008), there is more to be learnt about their links with wellbeing at the organisational level.

The components of innovative and entrepreneurial organisations include, inter alia, shared vision, leadership, the will to innovate, a gathering of key promoters, champions, ideators and gatekeepers, and effective team working, all form part of a high-involvement innovation culture in a creative climate (Tidd et al., 2013). Understanding the nexus of people, organisations and environment enabling entrepreneurship (Mitra, 2013) is useful, but of similar importance is the knowledge and understanding of how these components play out in the wellbeing of the people who work in these innovative organisations, and whether the nurturing of such wellbeing has special value for these organisations.

The negative and complex impact of rapid changes in the business environment can affect employees and the organisation as a whole. These assumptions can make or break the situation. In this case it hampers the employee's wellbeing as it creates a form of dysfunctionality brought about by various kinds of distress (Peterson and Wilson, 2002).

To the best of my knowledge, little is known about the relationships between entrepreneurs and their employees and, crucially, the affective functionalities of people working closely with the entrepreneur to seek entrepreneurial solutions to business creation and development problems. The centrality of the entrepreneur in entrepreneurship and innovation might not be disputed. However, it is inconceivable that successful, high impact ventures would be able to navigate Knightian uncertainty (Knight, 1921) and earn the entrepreneurial premium without the congruent factors of shared envisioning, combinatorial talent and skills, and creative dissonance, the totality of which is found in the wellbeing of both the entrepreneur and his or her organisational team. The literature makes assumptions about these factors, reflecting on innovative management functions and behaviour, but the voice of the 'others' in the entrepreneurial organisation is seldom heeded. The stories of those who nurture the entrepreneur's charisma and have a high impact, possibly capture attention when dysfunctional arrangements, neglect of wellbeing and scandals, such as those that have rocked Silicon Valley (notably at Uber) in recent times, hit the headlines.

Entrepreneurship researchers have recently started paying attention to wellbeing, but the main focus again is on the heroic entrepreneur and overlooks the employees who work for entrepreneurs in entrepreneurial organisations. Researchers have started exploring the role of wellbeing in entrepreneurial task engagement (see Foo et al.,

2009; Foo, 2011; Hahn et al., 2012), albeit from the entrepreneur's perspective. Studies have found that entrepreneurship can lead to high levels of stress (Monsen and Boss, 2009), fear (Mitchell et al., 2008), and grief (Jenkins et al., 2014) considering that the entrepreneurial process is uncertain and emotionally draining.

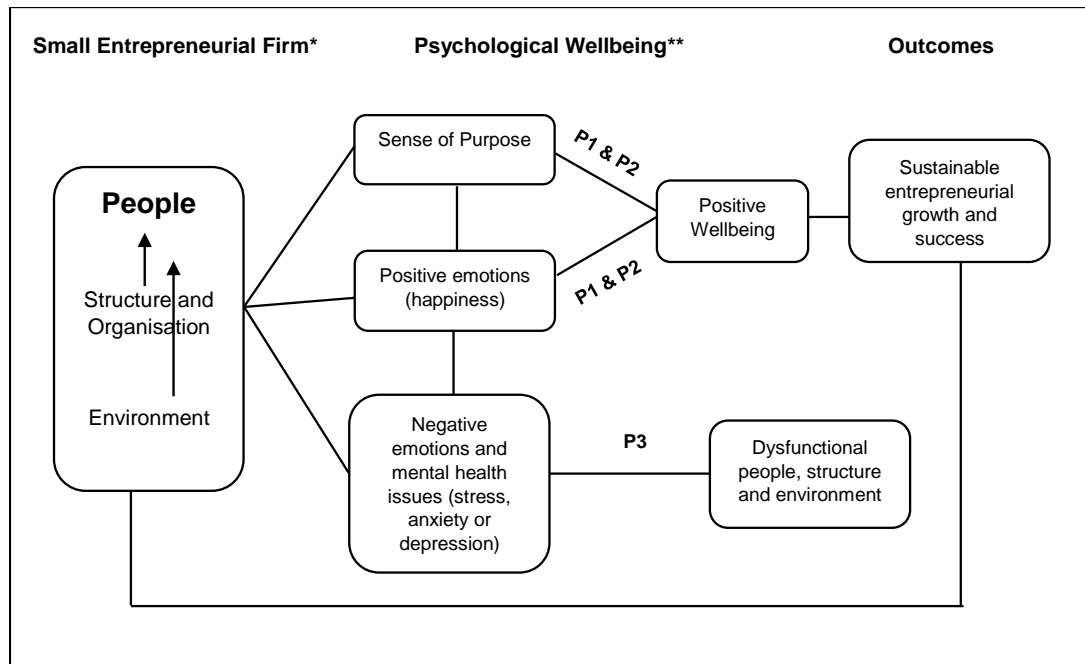
Some researchers are also exploring and building integrative theoretical and empirical evidence to understand and study the psychological mechanisms through which entrepreneurship affects wellbeing (Shir, 2015; Williams and Shepherd, 2016). Additionally, studies on entrepreneurial wellbeing (Shir, 2015) or positive affect (Baron, 2008) are centred round the charismatic magnificent entrepreneur (Uy et al., 2013). Few studies have proven that considering and giving attention to the mental health and wellbeing of the entrepreneur is seen as a critical indicator of their success (Wach et al., 2016; Shir, 2015; Stephan, 2018) and in understanding the entrepreneurial action, motivations and decision-making (see Shepherd and Patzelt, 2015) in turn helps the firm to sustain its economic and social gains and benefits (Stephan, 2018).

I argue that it is not only important to give importance to the wellbeing of the entrepreneur but also to the wellbeing and mental health of the employee working with the entrepreneur in an entrepreneurial organisation. Figure 2 below summarises in diagrammatic form my understanding of the literature and provides a conceptual framework with which to explore wellbeing in small firms. In this conceptual framework, I use the components of small entrepreneurial firms, which include the people, environment, structure and organisation (Mitra; 2013; Tidd et al., 2013; Simon, 2009; Westland, 2008; Prahalad and Krishnan, 2008; Kim and Maubogne, 2005; Galbraith, 2004; Muzyka; 1999) and the conceptualisations of wellbeing (both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects) as well as the negative facets of wellbeing at work (Ryff and



Keyes, 1995; Robertson and Cooper, 2011; Reid and Ramarajan, 2016). This conceptual framework is the overview of the various constructs and propositions and the possible interactions between them.

Figure 2: An Overarching People-Oriented Conceptual Framework for the Study of Wellbeing in Small Entrepreneurial Organisations



**Source:** \* Mitra (2013); Tidd et al (2013); Simon (2009); Westland (2008); Prahalad and Krishnan (2008) Kim and Maurbogne (2005); Galbraith (2004); Muzyka (1999); \*\* Ryff and Keyes (1995); Robertson and Cooper (2011); Reid and Ramarajan (2016).

Assuming that the creative talent and innovative capabilities of the 'other group' of people are important and that the dysfunctional features of entrepreneurial organisations can act as barriers to sustainable growth, there is a need to understand and study these 'others' (other than the entrepreneur). Understanding entrepreneurial organisations is, therefore, dependent on obtaining multiple perspectives drawn from the statements, actions and behaviour of both entrepreneurs and the people working with them in innovative organisations. This study attempts to explore these diverse

subjective perceptions and experiences of individuals through the following research questions:

- How are entrepreneurial organisational culture and employees' mental health and wellbeing related?
- What are the factors that affect employees' wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations? How and why are they important?
- How does the need to become and sustain an entrepreneurial organisation affect employees' wellbeing and mental health at work?

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter helps us understand and review the existing workplace wellbeing literature to understand the wellbeing constructs and the existing debate in the field. It then moves on to reviewing the literature on small entrepreneurial firms, their components and the role of people in these firms. Once we have a clear idea of these concepts and their existing literature, the chapter moves on to discussing the possible relationship between workplace wellbeing and small entrepreneurial organisations. The well-laid arguments in the above chapter lead us to conceptual and contextual lack of understanding of how workplace wellbeing manifests in small firms as per the entrepreneurship literature and workplace wellbeing literature respectively. Since there is a lack of existing studies on this phenomenon, this study takes an inductive approach to explore workplace wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations by including the lay descriptions and subjective views of the participants in understanding and experiencing wellbeing at work. The following chapter will clearly outline the research design and methodology for conducting this empirical study.

## **Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the research design and methodology followed for gathering, evaluating and presenting data to achieve the objectives of the study, and is divided into eight main sections.

The first section sketches the philosophical foundations of the study and adopts an interpretivist standpoint based on a subjective ontology. This provides clarity and defines a basic belief system that guides this research on employee wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations. The second segment outlines the research approach used in this study and explains the rationale behind using an inductive approach, which is then followed in the third section by the specifying of the research design within the chosen philosophical framework. This section focuses on the process of research design by defining the research strategies and research choices. The following section provides an overview of the chosen methodology, that is, a qualitative case study approach and discussion of the rationale behind choosing “small entrepreneurial organisation” as a unit of analysis. This is closely connected to the fifth part based on the aspects of fieldwork involved in obtaining access to participants and conducting in-depth interviews. It discusses other complementary methods for data collection. The sixth section highlights the data management techniques utilised in this research. The seventh section outlines the data analysis process and the detailed analytical procedures applied to the data collected. This data analysis technique has been inspired by the constructivist grounded theory (Gioia methodology), where coding is used for the purpose of analysis. Finally, the eighth section deals with the ethical considerations and reflective account of the researcher throughout the duration of the study.

### **3.2. Philosophical assumptions/foundations**

In all management research, methodology plays the most crucial role, aiming to make the research more credible and reliable. The quality of the research outcome relies on the importance given to the philosophical foundation of the research, and the manner in which the researcher interprets and comprehends the reality of the world influences the research process and thereafter has a bearing on the findings and research outcomes. Therefore, building a strong foundation of the philosophical assumptions will help the researcher to select apt research strategies and methods. These are certain benefits of understanding philosophical issues and various research approaches highlighted by Easterby-Smith et al. (2008). A good understanding of the characteristics of the different philosophical paradigms may help the researcher to foresee which research designs may work and which may not. It may help the researcher to identify and create research designs that might be unknown to him/her. The authors also state that it helps the researcher to develop a research identity.

#### **3.2.1. Research paradigms and philosophical assumptions**

A researcher begins a study with certain assumptions about how they will learn and what they will learn during their study/inquiry. This process is also referred to as stating a knowledge claim/philosophical foundation (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Creswell, 2003). These claims might be called paradigms (Lincoln and Guba, 2000); philosophical assumptions, epistemologies, and ontologies (Crotty, 1998); or broadly conceived research methodologies (Neuman, 2000).

Researchers make claims about what is knowledge (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), what values go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric), and the processes for studying it (methodology) (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). As

researchers in the management field, we need to be aware of the philosophical viewpoints we choose to have, which are reflected through our research strategies and have a vital role not only in what we do but also in understanding what it is we are studying/researching (Johnson and Clark, 2006). In order to start thinking about the research philosophy, we need to understand its two key facets: ontology and epistemology. Each holds significant differences, which will impact the manner in which one thinks about the research process.

Ontology refers to the way we view the world, that is, the “nature of reality” (Saunders et al., 2009), which might be formed by personal views and might therefore be subjective. There are some who believe that reality/social world exists independent of their views. Reality can, therefore, be studied objectively through empirical research. On the contrary there are some who believe that reality is socially constructed through interactions and it does not occur independent of researchers’ perception of the world in which they live (Hughes and Sharrock, 2016). These are the two main viewpoints held by management researchers, that is, the former group has a very ‘objective’ view and the latter take a ‘subjective’ stance to understand the social world/reality. Consequently, ontology advocates assumptions about the researcher’s belief system and philosophies about what he/she believes to be valid in terms of knowledge, which leads the researcher to contemplate how this knowledge can be acquired, studied and interpreted.

The study of knowledge is known as epistemology, and it aims to inform and provide structure for the research. It is mainly concerned with the concepts of how we know, what we know and at times why we know what we know. Ontological and epistemological assumptions guide the research to develop a suitable research design

with the appropriate methodology for investigating the research problem. This gives rise to various paradigms, such as positivism, realism, interpretivism, constructivism and pragmatism.

The philosophical traditions of interpretivism are based on a socially constructed, subjective ontological position. This paradigm does not look at the world in objective terms and strict causal relationships. It depends on generalisations based on personal views that are drawn from certain specific observations, unlike the positivist inquiry which relies on testing the hypotheses. Hence, this paradigm focuses on an inductive approach to generate a possible relationship between different entities in the world (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). As per Saunders et al. (2009), "interpretivism advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors." Researchers belonging to this paradigm believe in multiple social realities that are value-laden and only come to light through individual interpretation. It is said that these traditions evolved in response to a positivist philosophy, arguing that only by acknowledging the differences between social actors who interpret the reality according to their beliefs, values, knowledge and experiences might one gain deep and rich insights into the intricate and subjective world.

### **3.2.2. Locating the study within interpretivism**

Interpretivists believe that the multiple realities exist due to distinct and different interpretations of social actors in different contexts, hence reality is subjective to the person interpreting these (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). This study is informed by the interpretivist paradigm accounting for multiple socially constructed, subjective realities (ontological position) and studying employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations. This study originates from the assumptions that individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals make their own

subjective perceptions and meanings of their experiences, and this influences their behaviour. These experiences and interpretations are unique and diverse, which enables me to understand and gauge the complexity of viewpoints instead of narrowing these meanings down to limited ideas. My goal is to depend on the informant's interpretations of the situation/context/aspect being studied. Therefore, the questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a condition that they would generally not discuss while interacting with others. This research aims to understand and explore informants' interpretations and meanings of wellbeing within the context of a small entrepreneurial organisation. This view has gained contemporary currency both in academic research circles and in business practice (Chang and Lu, 2007, Peterson and Wilson, 1998, Odell, 2014).

The concept of employee wellbeing is subjective by nature and depends on the perception of individuals (Schein, 2010). Wellbeing is not only subjective in terms of rating how well one is (Diener, 1994), but also in terms of what constitutes wellbeing. One can say one is well because one experiences pleasure. However, for others a life with wellbeing might be more about engagement and fulfilment (see also Vella-Brodrick et al., 2009). King and Nappa (1998) suggest that one's own conceptualisations of wellbeing influence the interpretation of the existence or absence of the wellbeing of others, but different people might have different concepts of what it means to have wellbeing.

Various employees within an organisation might have their own unique interpretation and comprehensions of wellbeing within a given environment or situation. Understanding these interpretations in their contexts requires the researcher to study social interactions and how they are formed in that context; thus, wellbeing is

considered to be a socially constructed phenomenon (Sun, 2009). This supports the adopted paradigm for this research.

In my research, the culture of an organisation is studied by looking beyond the superficial exterior in order to gain an in-depth understanding of how people construct and interpret the meanings of the basic assumptions, values and beliefs. An entrepreneurial culture is one that evolves continually (Detret et al., 2000) and is composed of dynamic interactions at various levels with different stakeholders (for instance, between employees, between entrepreneur and employees, employee-customer, or other stakeholders) (Mitra, 2013). Therefore, there is a sense of permanent navigation of different opportunities, which affects how they interpret and experience wellbeing at work.

I focus on the processes of interaction with the employees inside an organisational set-up/at the workplace in order to gain an understanding of the cultural settings of the participants in that context. The intention of the researcher is to make sense of employees' perception about the wellbeing construct and how the culture and other factors within small entrepreneurial organisations affects their wellbeing and mental health. Based on earlier wellbeing studies (Sastre, 1999, Delle Fave et al., 2011; McMahan and Estes, 2011; Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie, 2011), which attempted to understand the lay descriptions of wellbeing (some inductively and some theory-driven studies), I believe that several aspects for researching workplace wellbeing could be explored further if they followed an inductive approach for their research. I would argue that a truly inductive approach might allow components to emerge from lay descriptions of wellbeing experiences, rather than using measurement or coding schemes based on theoretical definitions of wellbeing.



This is an inductive approach in which the research eventually develop into a theory or pattern. The assumptions are in line with Crotty (1998); meanings are co-constructed or socially created by employees while working in these small entrepreneurial organisations. These meanings and experiences would be influenced by the culture within such firms, the various dynamic relationships and interactions within and outside the firm, the various structures within the firm and the environment. These employees engage with these varied elements within such organisations and make sense of it based on their past experiences and social perspectives. Thus, I seek to understand the context and setting, that is, their workplace, through visiting them and gathering information personally, bearing in mind that my own interpretation is shaped by my own experiences and background. Using open-ended questions helps these participants to express their views, giving an in-depth insight into their wellbeing experiences at work. This process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with theme-generating meanings from the data collected in the field.

Taking the question of wellbeing further, I seek to understand employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations. The employees within an organisation are attached to networks of relationships, and they have different social experiences that need to be explored in order to understand how and what impacts the wellbeing of these employees. There are qualitative studies in entrepreneurship that help us understand the link between the core life issues of an entrepreneur and his strategic orientation towards the firm in pursuing and exploiting opportunities (Kisfalvi, 2002). A need for more qualitative studies in entrepreneurship has been recognised (Gartner and Birley, 2002; Neergaard and Ulhøi, 2007), as entrepreneurship is a multifaceted and complex social construct (Leitch et al., 2010). This strengthens my argument of an in-depth qualitative approach to understand the meaning-making process of people working in small entrepreneurial organisations. This philosophy creates a strong base

for exploring uncharted depths, acknowledging the researcher's involvement in the study. The interpretivist stance can be helpful in understanding the nature of entrepreneurial activities/orientation within organisations by analysing the social realities and meanings constructed by the employees through their discourse. This is particularly pertinent for the study of small entrepreneurial organisations, because unlike other small firms, the propensity of these firms to develop innovatively and manage fast growth with limited resources demands a constantly evolving set of relationships as different pressures and expectations are put on the entrepreneur and employees to achieve positive outcomes on their innovative journeys. While multiple and different tasks performed by individuals would be expected in many small firm environments, the entrepreneurial firm will expect all its people to adjust to higher levels of uncertainty and flexibility because of the innovation process guiding their growth (Hughes, 2001; OECD, 2010; Acs and Audretsch, 2005; Mitra, 2013).

### **3.3. Research Approach: Inductive**

Research paradigms have a bearing on the approach a researcher adopts in conducting his/her study. The philosophical framework has directed the researcher to follow an inductive approach where through observations, meanings and interpretations form patterns/themes that exist in small entrepreneurial firms. These patterns/themes may help us understand the wellbeing experiences within these firms, whether there are similarities or differences in how people behave and whether there lies any pattern in the factors that influence these behaviours. These associations and themes enable us to generate the possibility of developing a new theory or model for understanding workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms. An inductive approach is best suited for this study because it focuses on exploring all possible answers to the research problem.

Inductive methods are especially helpful for making progress on challenging and complex problems with significant implications, unknown solutions, and intertwined and evolving technical and social interactions (Eisenhardt et al., 2016). My research offers similar possibilities for the investigation of complex issues, because very little research on workplace wellbeing has been carried out in the specific context of small entrepreneurial organisations. This means that the results of this investigation might provide answers to various unsolved questions. This research attempts to answer the research questions by producing novel ideas, exploring and unpacking various subtle constructs (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Eisenhardt et al., 2016) within workplace wellbeing and small entrepreneurial organisations, which is supported by an inductive approach.

Furthermore, an inductive approach is considered appropriate for my research because it is particularly concerned with the context in which workplace wellbeing has an impact on people in both positive and negative ways, within small entrepreneurial organisations. Consequently, the study of a small sample of subjects is appropriate for such an approach because it gives an in-depth exploration of the topic rather than a superficial outcome.

The inductive approach also informs a qualitative methodology and the use of a variety of methods to gather data in order to capture diverse views of a specific phenomenon (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). One of the reasons the inductive approach is more applicable to this study is that the researcher is particularly interested in understanding wellbeing in depth and gaining various insights into why wellbeing matters in such organisations. This study is not merely trying to describe the situation, but instead explores the various aspects within an organisation that have a bearing on the

employees' wellbeing. Moreover, the core value of this study is to give voices to the people within small entrepreneurial firms, by means of a realistic and true depiction of their perceptions of their experiences (Gioia et al., 2013). I attempt to take a naturalist view that meanings, experiences, knowledge and understanding are socially constructed through shared meanings, experiences and language (Meyers, 2008) and are subjective, and therefore we need an in-depth exploration of these subjective viewpoints (Gephart, 2004).

### **3.4. Research Design – Exploratory Research**

The research design for a study is an overall plan of how the researcher intends to go about answering the research questions. As my literature review demonstrates in the entrepreneurial literature and empirical studies, only a limited amount of research has been conducted in understanding the wellbeing aspect of the people working in entrepreneurial organisations (Shir, 2015; Uy et al., 2013). I therefore aim to explore untouched and untainted aspects of employee wellbeing in such organisations. An exploratory research design helps the researchers to tackle this novel topic of wellbeing, acknowledging all possible revelations of new data and new insights. An exploratory study is a valuable means of finding out 'what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light' (Robson, 2002:59). In this case, choosing an exploratory approach is indeed useful because I wish to clarify the understanding of a problem, especially because we are unsure of the precise nature of this problem. That is to say, we are unsure of what we will discover while studying the aspect of employee wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations.

This study is informed by these means, starting with a literature review followed by conducting in-depth interviews of the key informants, reviewing varied documents from

diverse reliable sources and also interviewing 'experts' in this field to gain in-depth unbiased insights into this topic. New data and new insights might appear once the researchers dig deep into the topic, and therefore an exploratory approach gives the researcher a great deal of flexibility and adaptability to change as per the new revelations. Adams and Schvaneveldt (1991) reinforce this point by arguing that the flexibility inherent in exploratory research does not mean absence of direction to the enquiry, it merely means that the focus at the beginning is broad and gradually narrows down when the research advances.

### **3.5. Methodology**

The strategies of inquiry contribute to the overall research approach and once the researcher adopts a particular research paradigm, the choice of methodology is implied. Many researchers in the field of culture advocate the phenomenological approach, emphasising the qualitative understanding of meaning and interpretation of culture (Denison, 1984). While a few researchers studying mental health have used quantitative methods in the past (Cooper and Dewe, 2008, Johnson et al., 2005), the totality of the experience of stress, anxiety and depression in different organisational cultures and environments is often missed, including the context where stress arises and how people perceive, attribute, and evaluate such a context in relation to their wellbeing (Chang and Lu, 2007). Qualitative research provides an in-depth and detailed analysis by recording attitudes, feelings and behaviours of employees, creates openness by encouraging employees to elaborate on their responses which can open up new topic areas not initially considered, and simulates employees' lived experiences, which portrays a detailed picture about why they act in certain ways and their feelings about these actions (Berg et al., 2004). Therefore, the choice of a qualitative research strategy is considered appropriate to answer the research question in the best possible manner.

The use of a qualitative approach is also in line with the subjective ontological and interpretivist epistemological positions of this research. Qualitative research is useful for this study in order to study in depth the ways in which people think or behave. The way to understand their perception about wellbeing is to sit down and talk to them, let them share their experiences and be open about their feelings. Qualitative data gives genuine insight and more holistic information about the behaviour of people (in this case employees), which gives us rich, in-depth and true data to unpack and understand the various constructs at play.

### **3.5.1. Qualitative Case Study Approach**

A qualitative study helps to explore a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses, which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

Stake (1995) and Yin (2014) were the key researchers who proposed the two approaches that guide case study methodology. Even though they both warranted that the area of interest should be well explored with the revelation of the complete essence of the phenomenon, each of them employed different methods. Also, it is important to understand that both these researchers based their approach to case study on a constructivist philosophical paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm, “recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning but does not reject outright some notion of objectivity. Pluralism, not relativism, is considered important, with the focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object” (Miller and Crabtree, 1999, p. 10 cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008). The heterogeneity of wellbeing experiences in

small entrepreneurial firms and the diverse factors that influence workplace wellbeing are all viewed as important and vital in this research.

This approach has an advantage in that there is a close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling informants to tell their stories (Crabtree and Miller, 1999 cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008). The respondents are able to describe their interpretation and perception of reality and this helps the researcher to understand in-depth the participants' behaviour and actions (Lather, 1992; Robottom and Hart, 1993 cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008).

#### **3.5.2.1. Rationale behind using a Qualitative Case study approach**

According to Yin (2014), a case study design should be considered when the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; the researcher cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study; the researcher wishes to cover contextual conditions because they believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

In the current study the questions are "what", "how" and "why", within an entrepreneurial organisational context, different factors may affect the wellbeing of employees. Since the study is about organisations and the employees working in such organisations, I essentially wish to take into consideration the contextual conditions, as they are relevant to the phenomenon under study. In the research, there would a close relationship between the researcher and the organisations/employees, which makes it advantageous to understand in-depth the employees' perceptions about wellbeing and how the organisation's attributes affect their mental health and wellbeing (positive or negative).

### **3.5.2.2. Types of Case Study**

The purpose of the overall research would be directed by the selection of a specific type of case study design. Yin (2014) classified the case studies as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive and also differentiated between single, holistic case studies and multiple-case studies, whereas Stake (1995) identifies case studies as intrinsic, instrumental, or collective. Table 2 below gives us a better understanding of the different types of case study.



Table 2: Definitions of Different Types of Case Study (Baxter and Jack, 2008)

Case Study Type	Definition
Explanatory	This type of case study would be used if one was seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. In evaluation language, the explanations would link programme implementation with programme effects (Yin, 2003).
Exploratory	This type of case study is used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003).
Descriptive	This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003).
Multiple-case studies	A multiple case study enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory (Yin, 2003).
Intrinsic	Stake (1995) uses the term intrinsic and suggests that researchers who have a genuine interest in the case should use this approach when the intent is to better understand the case. It is not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest. The purpose is NOT to come to understand some abstract construct or generic phenomenon. The purpose is NOT to build theory (although that is an option; Stake, 1995).
Instrumental	Is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinised, its ordinary activities detailed, and because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest. The case may or may not be seen as typical of other cases (Stake, 1995).
Collective	Collective case studies are similar in nature and description to multiple case studies (Yin, 2003)

An exploratory case study approach allows the researcher to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2003). Such an approach enables the researcher to explore the organisations and their employees; helping to deconstruct and reconstruct the phenomenon under study. The range of flexibility and rigour makes this approach valuable and also helps to generate a theory and develop interventions (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Exploratory case studies were used to explore and understand the construct of wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations. Even though there are three case study organisations in this research, I would not call these multiple case studies because as per Yin's description of multiple case studies or Stake's collective case study type, the goal is to replicate findings across cases. Since I am adopting an inductive approach where my aim is to gain an in-depth understanding and explore the varied wellbeing experiences at work, I believe that the exploratory case study model is more appropriate.

### **3.5.2.3. Unit of Analysis: Small entrepreneurial Organisations**

The case is defined by Miles and Huberman (1994 as cited in Baxter and Jack, 2008) as, "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context and in effect, your unit of analysis". I am aiming to analyse the construct of wellbeing and effect of organisational factors on wellbeing and mental health in small entrepreneurial organisations. Individuals (employees) constitute an organisation and since we are studying small entrepreneurial organisations, the unit of analysis would be entrepreneurial organisations, specifically small organisations.

In order to bind a case, I use the various suggestions given by various authors, which include: (a) by time and place (Creswell, 2003); (b) time and activity (Stake, 1995);

and (c) definition and context (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and this will ensure that the study remains within a reasonable scope. This qualitative case study design would establish boundaries which would indicate the breadth and depth of study (Creswell, 2003). In this case, I wished to include organisations based in the UK who fit the definition of small entrepreneurial organisation (*refer to section 2.3.1*) and were willing to participate in the study.

### ***Difference between Small firms and Small entrepreneurial firms***

Before we move into exploring small entrepreneurial organisations, we will try and understand the difference between small firms and small entrepreneurial firms. Not all small firms are entrepreneurial by nature, it is several characteristics and behaviour of the firm that makes it entrepreneurial. Small firms which create value by the means of new product/service development or new process creation are termed to be entrepreneurial (Mitra, 2013). Many studies have differentiated small business firms from entrepreneurial firms, and one such explanation of the difference was given by Carland et al. (1984: 358),

*“A small business venture is any business that is independently owned and operated, not dominant in its field, and does not engage in any new marketing or innovative practices. An entrepreneurial venture is one that engages in at least one of Schumpeter's four categories of behaviour: that is, the principal goals of an entrepreneurial venture are profitability and growth and the business is characterized by innovative strategic practices.”*

Additionally, they suggest that small business owners/managers do not display as much innovative behaviour and strategic management practices as do entrepreneurs. Another characteristic of small entrepreneurial businesses is their growth orientation

through innovation. This evolving characteristic changes over the firm's life cycle (Chell et al., 1991; Hardyman et al., 2001). This happens because the firm might choose stability over growth after a certain period of development, which would result in less or no innovation at all. Kourilsky (1980) described owners/managers as having an entrepreneurial spirit if they demonstrated future orientation. An entrepreneur must be engaged in an activity by being opportunistic and aiming at innovating new products, services or processes. This simply means that a firm ceases to be entrepreneurial when it chooses to not innovate and take no risk.

#### **3.5.2.3.1. Exploring the Small Entrepreneurial Organisations**

In entrepreneurship literature, a behavioural approach suggests that we need to study "what the entrepreneur does" rather than "who the entrepreneur is" (Gartner, 1988), which focuses on the entrepreneur's interaction with the internal and external environment (McCarthy, 2000). The same logic is applied in this study to understand the interactions of the employees (with internal and external people, structure and environment) working in entrepreneurial organisations, to figure out what these employees do and why they behave the way they do or do what they do in a given situation.

To explore workplace wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations we need to study the employees working in such organisations and their relationship with the entrepreneur, their interactions with the firm's routines, structure and environment, which may have an effect on how they behave at work and how they perceive their wellbeing at work. Individuals (employees) constitute an organisation and since we are studying small entrepreneurial organisations, the unit of analysis would be entrepreneurial organisations, specifically small organisations. Smaller organisations tend to have

more behavioural advantages that depend on resources such as flexibility to adapt to changing market demands and adoption of the latest innovations (Mitra, 2013). Internal management structures also add to the advantage of smaller organisations since they are less bureaucratic. Therefore, it is argued that smaller organisations are better able to harness the culture of innovation because they tend to have smaller decision-making teams (Mitra, 2013). Smaller decision-making teams appear to be both flexible and less constrained by time. The innovation does not emanate from the size of the team alone, but the adaptability to changing circumstances and opportunities made possible by the smallness of the decision-making group. Smaller organisations tend to have smaller knowledge tanks and human capital to overcome these issues. Their in-firm limitations cause them to lean towards networks, collaborations and knowledge transfer routines to improve their innovative capabilities and competitive edge (Rogers, 2004; Zahra et al., 2000; von Hippel, 1988).

The wellbeing literature shows a dearth of empirical research on small organisations, as it is suggested that small organisations do not necessarily have the resources to invest in or evaluate the wellbeing of their employees (Robertson and Cooper, 2011). This view negates the scope of wellbeing as a complex phenomenon associated with specific contexts. The nature of wellbeing in larger organisations may not be the same as that in smaller firms.

The entrepreneurship literature has begun to attract some interest in the concept of wellbeing, but it is restricted to the individual iconic entrepreneur and his/her wellbeing (see Stephan, 2016; Shir, 2015, Uy et al., 2013 in the chapter on Literature Review). Therefore, this research attempts to fill this construct and conceptual gap in both

workplace wellbeing and the entrepreneurship literature by choosing to study wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

#### **3.5.2.4. Sampling Technique**

There are various sampling techniques such as snowball sampling, theoretical sampling, convenience sampling or random sampling (Polit and Beck, 2008) used in a qualitative study. However, for my study, purposive sampling was the most apt sampling technique, as it enabled me to actively select the most productive sample to answer the research questions. Purposive sampling, as described by Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame (1981), is directed and altered by reflexive researchers towards the purpose of developing theory. Additionally, while using this sampling technique, researchers do more than act reflectively through engaging in deep and careful thought by being reflexive through the process (Emel, 2013). A purposive sampling technique was used where I identified three small entrepreneurial organisations in the United Kingdom who were willing to participate in this study. Purposive sampling is carried out when the researcher selects the respondent organisation(s) based on criteria keeping in mind the requirements and aims of the research (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003).

The choice was predicated on the fact that they were established small organisations where the development of products, services and processes were part of an existing portfolio supported by people other than the original entrepreneur. This sampling was based on my theoretical understanding of the small entrepreneurial organisations and their unique features and characteristics (Friedman and Carmeli, 2018; Mitra, 2013; Blackburn et al., 2013, Carland et al., 1984; Chell et al., 1991; Tidd et al., 2013; Mason 2002; Trost 1986). I was not specifically looking for small entrepreneurial firms within

the same industry or domain, as I wished to ascertain whether there were any similarities or differences between small firms from different industries.

The first case study organisation was a social enterprise with a social mission of reducing mental health problems and promoting wellbeing in society. The second firm was a privately-owned firm with a community-oriented mission, so they gave the utmost importance to their relationships, both within and outside of the firm. In the third case study, the organisation was a privately-owned high technology firm involved in cutting-edge technological innovations within a people-orientated view, which encouraged me to include this firm in my study. These three case studies were dependent on their tacit and intangible resources, orientated towards networks and collaborations to improve their innovative capabilities and competitive edge.

I followed the European Union recommendations (OECD, 2005), which define an organisation's size based on either the staff headcount or the turnover or balance sheet total (see table below.) In this case, I have chosen staff headcount to be the categorising factor when choosing small entrepreneurial organisations.

Table 3: Categorisation of SMEs (Source: OECD, 2005)

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

#### **3.5.2.4.2. Three Case Study Organisations**

Once the criteria had been set, several small entrepreneurial organisations were contacted via email using both personal and professional networks. The organisations were sent emails containing a synopsis of the research (see appendix 1) and based on their interest or lack thereof, access would be negotiated. The consent from the organisation was attained in writing in the form of an organisational consent letter. I personally met with certain organisations to discuss the study, considering they had some doubts and reservations. I was able to provide clarity and in-depth details about the study to most organisations. At the end of this process, there were four organisations willing to participate in and commit to this study.

One of the organisations that were interested in participating had gone as far as signing a non-disclosure agreement, but I had to drop them because they were not responding to my emails. After repeated follow ups, they vaguely mentioned that their employees were not able to find time to participate in my study. I believe one of the reasons was because wellbeing is a sensitive topic and not many organisations are ready to talk about this issue. It seemed obvious that only a handful of organisations were interested in letting an outsider come into their organisation to conduct a study based on wellbeing. This was a challenge that I had to overcome as a researcher by making the organisation understand that this study could benefit them and could not possibly harm their employees or organisational reputation. The organisations were then asked to provide a written organisational consent letter indicating their willingness to participate.

The three selected case study organisations depicted a wide variety of small entrepreneurial organisations, as they consisted of a social enterprise, a privately-



owned community-based enterprise and a privately-owned high technology firm. The first case study (social enterprise) had a unique ability to serve society through innovation and perseverance, with economically constrained resources but higher levels of social capital to make a difference to the community as a whole (Di Domenico et al., 2010). The notion of innovative social practice, collective organisational arrangements, addressing non-market-oriented needs of communities of interest, and the creation of social value and social capital, together form the basis of social entrepreneurship (Pillay and Mitra, 2015; Nicholls, 2010, 2008; Smith et al., 2008; Trexler, 2008; Dees, 1998).

Much attention has been given recently by the press, researchers and policy makers to the idea of socially motivated private organisations, not least because of issues around social fragmentation, employee welfare issues and ownership. This has also led to the growing importance of understanding community-based entrepreneurial organisations, which focuses on the interactions between the community, families and the entrepreneurs (Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Cornwall, 1998; Onyx and Bullen, 2000) and how these organisations create personal ties and networks in order to grow and sustain their business (Wincent and Westerberg, 2005; Chell and Baines, 2000). The second case study (privately-owned community-based public house) was one such firm that had strong network ties within the community.

The third case study organisation is a privately-owned high-technology entrepreneurial firm. High technology organisations are often required to have organic models that allow them to be flexible in both processes and structure, because the level of uncertainty is higher, where technology is fast moving and evolving continuously (Tidd et al., 2013; Mitra, 2013). In such scenarios, there is a need to have specialist teams

(Tidd et al., 2013) within the organisation to cater to such evolving needs of the market, making the people working in such organisations an inevitable part of the innovation process in such organisations. The high technology firm that I selected for this study was an appropriate choice because their focus on people's wellbeing within the organisation was important and much needed in order to innovate and be entrepreneurial.

The table below gives us a snapshot of these three case study organisations and Chapter Four provides a more detailed background and context for these case study organisations.

Table 4: A sketch of the three-case study organisation

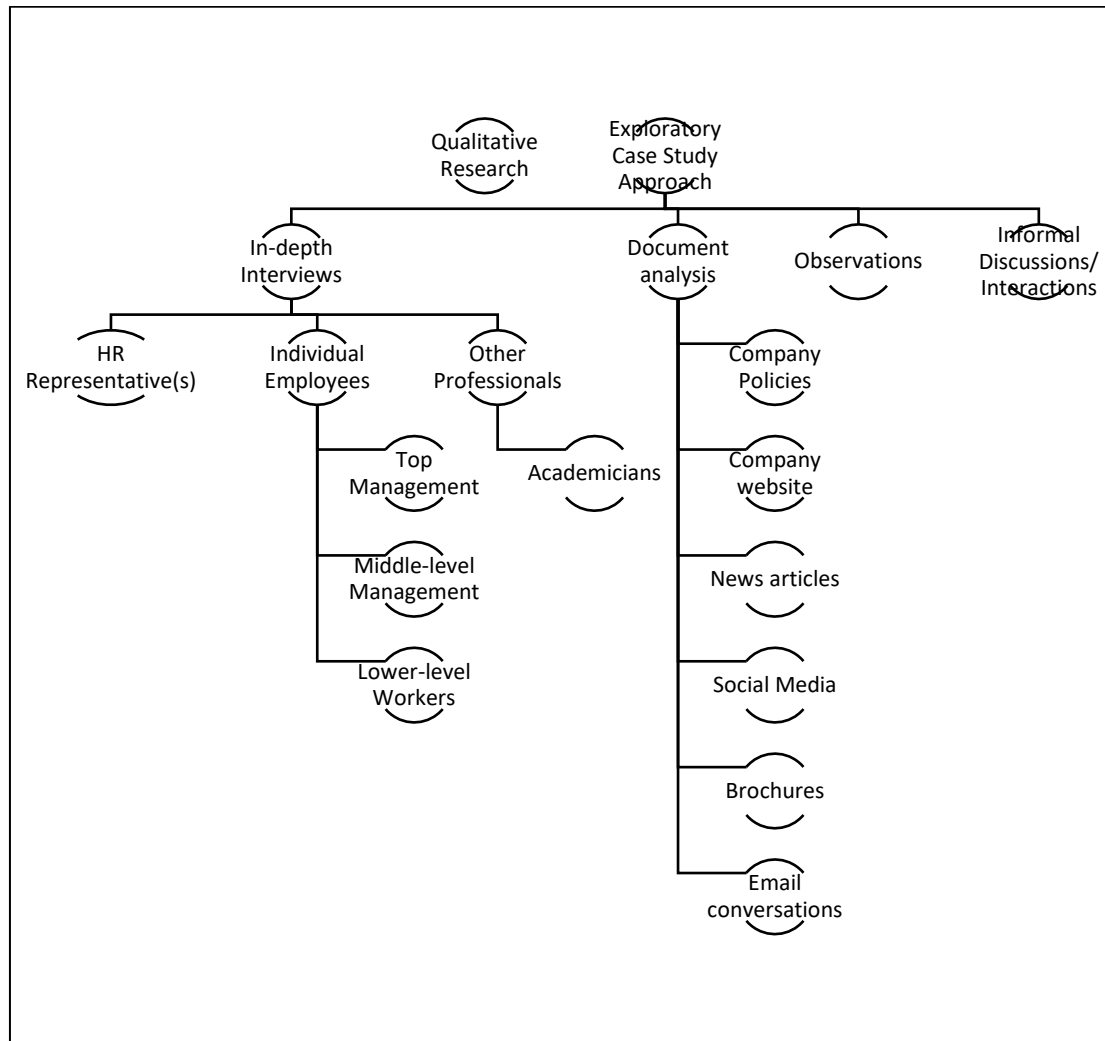
Case Study	Nature of Business	Year of establishment	Total no. of Employees (including the FT/PT and entrepreneur)
I	Social enterprise	2003	9
II	Privately-owned community based public house (pub)	2015	9
III	Privately-owned Hi-tech firm	1991	26

### 3.6. Data Collection Methods

All approaches have their prescribed methods/procedures, and it is useful to consider the full range of possibilities for data collection in any study, and to organise these methods by their degree of predetermined nature, their use of closed-ended versus open-ended questioning, and their focus on numeric versus non-numeric data analysis (Creswell, 2003). The aim of the study is important in order to choose the methods of data collection. For example, if the researcher has already specified the type of information to be collected, then a survey questionnaire could be a possible method to collect data, or if the researcher intends to allow the information to emerge from the

informants in the study, then an in-depth interview might be the best method to adopt. In some methods of data collection, both quantitative and qualitative data are gathered (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: Methods for Data Collection



### 3.6.1. In-depth interviews

In consideration of my choice for exploratory research, the methods used for data collection include in-depth interviews and observation, since they help to examine behaviour that takes place within specific social situations, including behaviour that is

shaped and constrained by these situations, and people's understanding and interpretation of their experiences (Wilson and Chaddha, 2009). In-depth interviews helped to explore the employees' perception and meaning about their own wellbeing in the workplace and how they perceived the role of culture and other factors within their organisation. According to Boyce and Neale (2006:3), "in-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspective on a particular idea, program, or situation." In-depth interviews indicate a face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the informants using open-ended questions.

Once the organisational consent had been received, I met with the HR representative of the organisations for an initial briefing/meeting. In this meeting, we exchanged the company brochure, PR materials, policy book/SOPs and all other important documents, which helped me understand the background and context of the organisations. After this meeting, I emailed individual employees and sought their willingness to participate in the study. This was done to ensure that there would be strict confidentiality maintained through this study. An information sheet and individual consent forms were shared with these employees via email. Their consent was attained in writing and recorded consent was taken before commencement of the interview. Once consent had been gained, the time, date and a mutually (participant and researcher) suitable location for the interview was arranged. Most interviews were held at their respective workplace in a private meeting space or cabin, based on their preference and all interviews were audio recorded. I randomly selected employees from various departments and across all levels in order to gain valuable insights into their wellbeing at work. In most cases I interviewed almost all the employees. In total, 36 interviews were conducted, which also included the interviews conducted in the pilot study (see the table below for case study-wise numbers). The pilot study was

conducted in Case Study 1 wherein five employees were interviewed and amongst these only two were re-interviewed with the revised guide. The remaining three employees had left the organisation between the pilot and main study (Refer to 3.6.4)

Table 5: Number of Interviews in each case study organisation

	<b>Case Study I</b>	<b>Case Study II</b>	<b>Case Study III</b>
<b>Pilot Study</b>	5		
<b>Main Study</b>	6	8	17
<b>Total</b>	11	8	17

#### **3.6.1.1. Use of interview guides**

The interview guide of this study was designed taking into consideration the research objectives and the existing literature on workplace wellbeing and entrepreneurial organisations. An interview guide was developed to help the researcher to ensure that all the necessary points had been covered during the interview and that the conversation did not lose its focus. The guide would act as a checklist so that all the issues would be systematically covered in the interviews (see appendix 2).

I decided to make my interview process more creative and interactive, and therefore, I used activities in my interviews. The first activity was to ask the participants to take one picture from their mobile phone/tablet of anything (person, place or thing) in one's organisation that resembles or showcases the culture of that organisation, and to bring this along to the interview. I had a back-up in case someone did not bring a picture along with them; I would ask them to describe the organisational culture in their own words. The aim was to enable them to narrate their story about why they clicked or selected this particular picture and how they perceived the organisational culture. Most

of my interviewees forgot to bring a picture, so they simply described the culture in their own words (these words are mentioned in Chapter Four, while providing a background and context to each case study organisation). I felt like the picture would have given more information and an in-depth understanding of how they perceived the culture, however, I kept probing them when they used particular word(s) while describing the culture within their firm. This gave me an in-depth understanding about what they perceived and why they felt a particular way about the organisational culture. This discussion about the culture eased the participants into the interview process and they were open about discussing their wellbeing-related experiences at work. I noticed that the interview guide was helpful for the initial interviews, where as a novice researcher I was always nervous about the process and about making sure I asked the right questions. I eased myself into the process after a few interviews, after which the discussions were free-flowing and spontaneous.

I had one more activity halfway through the interview process, where I asked the participants to explain wellbeing using their own words and then gave them a choice of words (written on placards) asking them which amongst these words were important to their personal wellbeing? Why was this important? Does this prevail in your organisation? There were twenty different words used in this activity and these were sourced from the entrepreneurial organisation and workplace wellbeing literature (see Appendix 2). This activity was useful because it gave the participants a head start in thinking about the factors that affected their wellbeing. Some participants said that these words triggered them to think about more words or phrases, which they included while answering the above questions. Overall, I felt that the activities and the guide were useful to get the participants talking, however, with most participants I went on probing and asking questions based on what they expressed and talked about during the interview process, rather than sticking to the guide.

### **3.6.2. Observations and Informal discussions**

The focus of this study was to explore the day-to-day practices, including patterns of interaction and ways of working and how these elements affected an individual's wellbeing at work. Observation can reveal what people cannot or will not express (Bechky, 2011) and therefore I conducted some participant observations and had informal discussions with participants in each organisation (see table 6 below). Various observations and informal interactions and discussions formed an integral part of the research data. This information enriched the interview data and facilitated checking the reliability of the data gathered.

I noted down what happened or what was said at a particular time and then recorded this information in the form of field notes. Informal observations were made in order to obtain deeper insights into the topic (for instance: while waiting at the respondent's workplace for the interview session or at an event in the organisation, being part of a team meeting). These observations were extremely vital to understanding the various attributes in their workplace culture and how people behave within an organisational setup. Moreover, they helped in gaining new insights into untold facets of wellbeing at the workplace. Field notes were recorded in the form of voice messages (and later transcribed) on the researcher's mobile device in order to avoid any special attention and to avoid any kind of bias. This helped the research to capture qualitative attributes in a natural setting without creating any distractions. I was extremely reflexive and mindful about the process and I also noted down my feelings and experiences while conducting the interviews or observations. I kept a field journal to record this valuable source of data. This journal was extremely beneficial when it came to writing up the research. These notes included a reflection of the values and beliefs that might have intervened in or changed over the research process. The data gathered from these observations form a part of Chapter 4, which gives us the background and context of

all the three case study organisations. This data also helped in interpreting the interview data, where I was able to relate to a person's experiences based on what I had observed.

### **3.6.3. Document Analysis**

The question of validity and reliability in this qualitative research will be addressed by using various methods (triangulations) in order to understand the research problem with greater specificity (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Creswell and Miller, 2000). As mentioned above, various company documents were collected and analysed, for instance company policies, procedures, brochures, email conversations between the researcher and the organisation, in order to create a contextual foundation for all three case study organisations (see table 6 below). These documents not only provided valuable data but also gave an in-depth comprehensive view of the situation within that organisation in the context of wellbeing. Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and news articles were analysed to gather information regarding employee wellbeing in the participant organisations. These documents were organised thematically with thematic codes being drawn from the literature. These themes are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.



Table 6: Data Collection (Adapted from Tucker et al., 2014)

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Case Study I</b>	<b>Case Study II</b>	<b>Case Study III</b>
In-depth Interviews	11	8	17
Observations (hrs)	6	3	2
Informal Discussions (hrs)	2	5	4
Internal Documents	10	1	3
Published white paper/other docs	3	-	-
Media (News and Social Media)	6	2	4

#### **3.6.4. Pilot Study**

I conducted a pilot study, a mini version of the main study to test the feasibility of my research tools, especially the interview guide. In this case, a pilot study was conducted in the first case study organisation with five participants. After I conducted the pilot study, I collected some feedback from the participants about the process, which helped me understand how to amend the schedule to gain deeper insights into the topic. I identified the logistical problems that might occur using the proposed activities during the interview process. For instance, the logistical challenge was to get the participants to bring photographs with them during the interview. However, three participants did bring their photos, and, therefore, I decided to keep the activity for the main study. These pilot study interviews helped me amend the interview guide.

The pilot study helped to collect initial data to explore and understand the bearing of the conceptual framework on the empirics. I used Gioia Methodology (using 1<sup>st</sup> order,

2<sup>nd</sup> order and aggregate themes) to analyse this data, which helped me to recognise and reveal the patterns that emerged from the data. These results showed that the possible patterns were emerging with reference to people, structure, environment and wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms.

### **3.7. Data Management**

The data management and analysis process began as soon as I entered the field. In this qualitative study I had digitally audio recorded interviews and transcripts of the respondents, field notes and any other related documents. It was a massive challenge to manage and store this amount of qualitative data and once the data was ready to use, only then could I possibly start analysing the data and communicate the findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Once the data was collected, it was formatted in a consistent manner so that there is a degree of uniformity in the method of collection throughout. Formatting included transcribing the interviews, typing up the field notes/observations and creating a written record for these notes with the name of the observer, interviewee, the place, time and date. Once the data had been uniformly formatted, it was stored on the computer using NVivo software.

Transcribing the interviews was a vital step in translating the raw data into a meaningful, comprehensible form. As per Kvale (1996), transcribing the interviews is an interpretative process that is much more than merely a clerical assignment. Therefore, the data analysis process is initiated once the transcribing has taken place. A proper system of labelling was created for every file and each page of the file, showing the contents of the file and the date it was created. Once the interviews had

been deconstructed, a narrative was written/created summarising the single event. These steps would ready the data for coding and indexing. Coding included deconstructing the data, labelling and categorising them into conceptual themes and developing codes/themes relevant to the subject. This exercise of coding was done with the help of NVivo software, and it led the researcher one step towards the analysis of the data. This software did not analyse the data for the researcher, but it helped to store, organise and arrange the data for further analysis. All the data was stored in a soft (computerised format) copy (both the recording and the transcripts) until the research was over. It was protected from any damage or loss and was accessible only by the researcher.

### **3.8. Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data refers to non-numeric forms of data, including audio recordings, interview transcripts, field notes, and relevant documents. The analysis of qualitative data refers to procedures and processes employed to interpret this non-numeric data to develop certain meanings and to generate an understanding of the phenomena under study. The qualitative data can be analysed through various diverse methods such as summarising, arranging meanings using narrative, coding or classifying into themes (Saunders et al., 2009).

I have used inspiration from grounded theory for data analysis, and the purpose of theory building. Although I am not using the exact grounded theory building methodology, I take inspiration from this to analyse my research data. The process laid down by Strauss and Corbin (1998) was to begin with coding the raw data into first order codes or measures, then raise them to a more abstract level called second-order themes, followed by engaging with the literature to sharpen the aggregate

themes. The Gioia Methodology (2013) turns this approach into a more organised method for new concept development and grounded theory articulation, which aims at improving qualitative rigour to the conduct and presentation of inductive research. The ultimate core interest is the same, which is building a strong theory with clear constructs, and better understanding of relationships between these constructs (Eisenhardt et al., 2016).

This study uses a systematic approach to coding respondent information inspired by the Gioia Methodology (Gioia, et al., 2013) to present the evidence with utmost accuracy and consistency. The analytical process has been initiated by looking at the transcripts to find “1st order codes”, namely codes formed using the respondents’ terminologies and phrases. The evidence is laid down in such a way that one can see the clear connection between data and the conceptual framework in the form of links among the quotes in the text, the “1st order codes”, “2nd order codes” and “Aggregate themes or concepts”.

After the initial set of interviews, I found similarities and distinctions among the different categories/codes. This enabled us to collate the codes that were similar and label them under a theme, using our understanding of the concepts of wellbeing and entrepreneurial organisations drawn from the literature (for instance, the components of entrepreneurial organisations include the people, environment, organisational structure, and so on, and so these theoretical constructs have been used in the coding structure). These 1st order codes correspond to Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) open coding system, which allows the codes to be based on terms used by the participants in the interviews. With such an inductive approach, open coding helps us to interpret

the participants' meanings in their own words. The codes emerge from the raw data without loss of meaning.

These codes were then further analysed and coded into 2<sup>nd</sup> order codes that match Strauss and Corbin's axial coding system that helps to classify or categorise similar or related codes. At this stage, we referred back to our knowledge about the literature on entrepreneurial organisations and wellbeing to categorise these first order codes. These 2<sup>nd</sup> order codes were subsequently consolidated into overarching concepts and dimensions called aggregate themes/concepts, which follow Strauss and Corbin's selective/theoretical coding (See Chapter 4 Section 4.2.5, 4.3.5 and 4.4.5 for the complete case-by-case data structures). The table below is an excerpt from the data structure. In the table you can see how similar first order codes are then merged into 2<sup>nd</sup> order themes, which later form an aggregate theme. The goal was to build a descriptive, multi-dimensional preliminary framework for later analysis. When these two layers of coding are explained together, they provide a clear demonstration of qualitative precision in showing the associations between the data and the theory supporting the data, together with the identification of appropriate markers for an effective and higher value qualitative study (Gioia et al., 2013).

Table 7: An example of the coding structure

1st Order Codes	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Themes
Autonomy at work Collective Responsibility Flexibility at work Personal Identity/Interests/Traits Opportunistic and proactive at work Accountability issues	Ownership and Entitlement at work	<b>The People Factor</b>
Passionate Entrepreneur (also incl. personality traits) Communication and Transparency with the entrepreneur Entrepreneur's managerial defects Open access to and support of entrepreneurs Dynamics between the owners/entrepreneur-wife	Relationship with the Entrepreneur	
Work-based relationships Relationships with customers and external stakeholders (consultants) Role of Managers/Managerial Support Experience and knowledge sharing One big family Network and personal ties Building Social/cultural capital Handling Wellbeing at work / Coping Mechanisms	Relational Assets	

### 3.9. Ethical Considerations

In a research involving human participants, there are many ethical issues, for example confidentiality, dignity, benefit-to-risk ratio and informed consent. The integrity of researchers is paramount in such cases. This research is a study about exploring the wellbeing of employees in small entrepreneurial organisations. The findings brought out both the positive (hedonic and eudaimonic) as well as the negative (stress and negative emotions) aspects of workplace wellbeing. There were times when the participants discussing their negative experiences were vulnerable to and were suffering from common mental health issues such as stress. However, considering that the participants were interviewed at work, it would be reasonable to assume that the extent of any mental health issues they faced (either in the past or present, but manageable) was not sufficiently severe that they were unfit to work. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that they had a good understanding of informed consent (Yanos et al., 2009).

I recruited employees working with an organisation who are part of the general population and not specifically people with mental health problems. Hence, in the context of the study, these participants were not highly vulnerable. I was extremely mindful about situations where the participant might reveal their mental health condition during the interview, so I was prepared to give the participant an option to either take a break and resume the interview later, or even withdraw if they were no longer comfortable. I did encounter a few cases where the participants opened up to me and teared up while talking about their wellbeing issues at work.

First, I reassured the participants that the information collected would be kept confidential and would not be disclosed. Second, I gave them the abovementioned options to either take a break or withdraw from the process. All these participants chose to continue with the interview and as a researcher I made sure I acknowledged and respected how they were feeling. I listened to the participants sensitively and actively by using responsive body language. I used a calm and reassuring tone while asking simple open-ended questions. At the end of every interview, I reflected back and summarised the information to the participants, to show them that I was paying attention and that their voices were important to me. At regular intervals, I would ask if the respondents were fine to continue with the interview and at any point if the researcher felt that the participant was getting too stressed or anxious or disturbed by the interview, the interview would be terminated in a very careful and subtle manner.

All of the above are in line with the guidelines set out by a leading NGO, MIND (UK), about communicating effectively with people with mental health problems (MIND, 2013, p.10). MIND provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a

mental health problem. No major issues were encountered during the interview process in any of the three case study organisations.

### **3.9.1. Informed Consent**

The principles of informed consent are based on the foundation that it is consent given by a 'knowledgeable, competent person/individual in a non-coercive condition' (Milne, 2005). In this research, the researcher will attain participant consent for conducting the interviews. The participant consent forms were duly signed by the individuals before the interview (See appendix 3). A second consent was recorded on the audio recorder at the time of the interview. This was to ensure that they were completely willing to participate in the study under no obligation or pressure.

### **3.9.2. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality was strictly maintained for the company as well as their employees, in that names or any other personal information would not be disclosed under any circumstances. Confidentiality of research participants was essential not only to meet the requirements of this project, but also to comply with international research norms (Walford, 2005). The BSA acknowledge that 'the anonymity and privacy of those who participate in the research process should be respected' (BSA, 2002:5). In the context of my study, this includes 'not discussing information provided by an individual with others' (Wiles et al., 2008:418). Therefore, the name of the organisation and the individual employees/individuals have been anonymised. Each case would be given a unique number and would be labelled systematically. Considering that wellbeing is a sensitive issue and not everyone is comfortable talking about these things openly, I was mindful about keeping the information confidential and I was open with the participants, so they trusted me with the information. Most of them were extremely



open and honest about their wellbeing experiences at work. This was beneficial to my study and it gave impactful insights into workplace wellbeing at small entrepreneurial organisations. For instance, the employees openly discussed their relationship with the entrepreneur (both positive and negative aspects) and how that had an impact on their wellbeing.

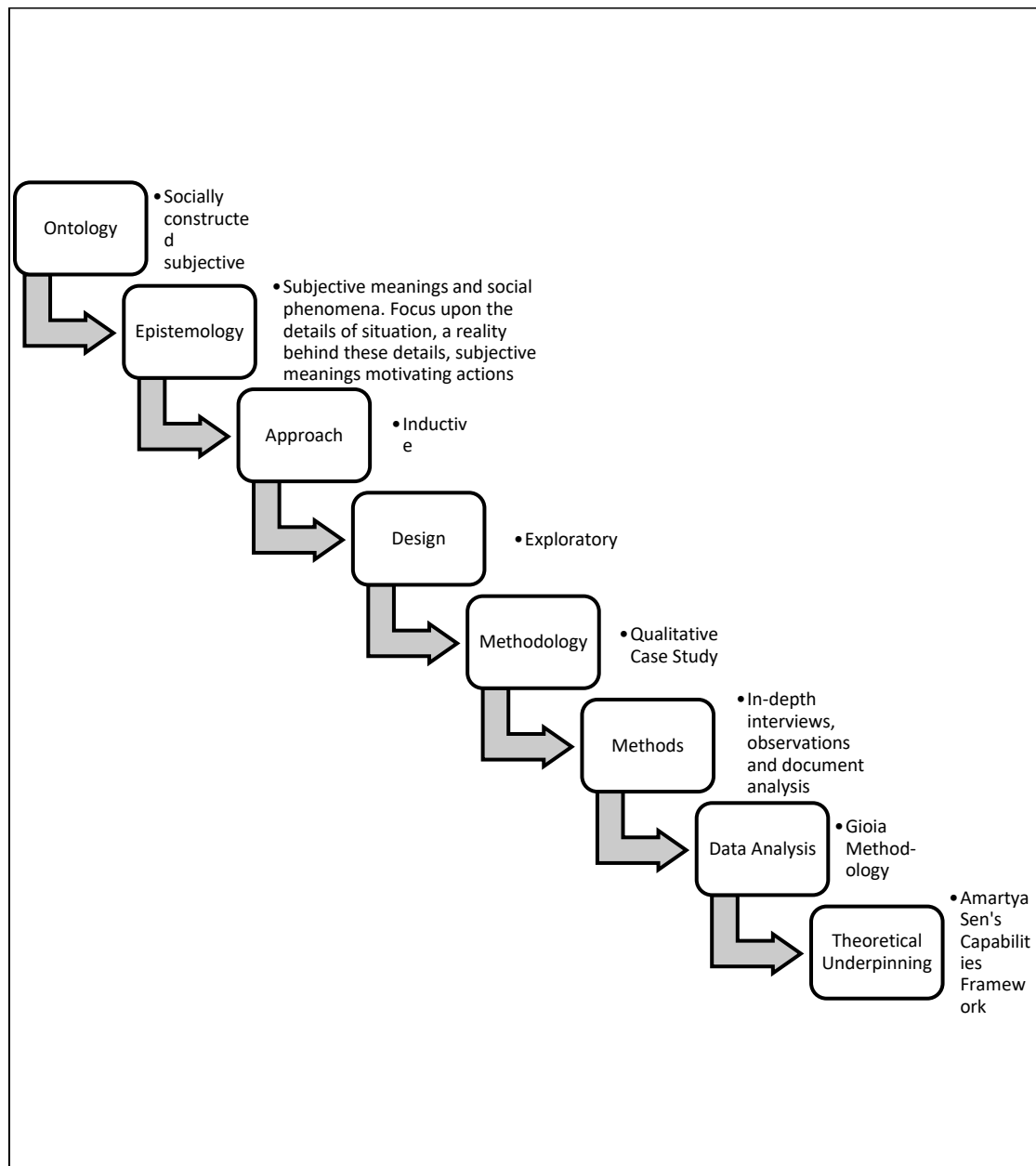
### **3.10. Conclusion**

The concept of employee wellbeing is subjective by nature and depends on the perception of individuals (Schein, 2010). Wellbeing is not only subjective in terms of rating how well one is (Diener, 1994), but also, for example, it is highly subjective in terms of what constitutes wellbeing. An inductive approach is especially helpful for making progress on challenging and complex problems with significant implications, unknown solutions, and intertwined and evolving technical and social interactions (Eisenhardt et al., 2016).

My research topic is unique because only a limited amount of research on workplace wellbeing has been conducted in the specific context of small entrepreneurial organisations. This means that the results of my work might provide answers to various unsolved questions. I attempt to answer the research questions by producing novel ideas, exploring and unpacking various subtle subjective constructs within workplace wellbeing and small entrepreneurial organisations, which is supported by an inductive approach (Eisenhardt et al., 2016). Using a qualitative case study approach and a grounded theory logic for data analysis, I aim to present my data using the Gioia methodology to accomplish qualitative rigour. Additionally, I use proposition development as a tool for creating a framework that is intellectually and theoretically robust and helps us to formulate the eventual model and theory (Eisenhardt, 2007;

1989) for future research. Using the literature review, I developed initial propositions and a conceptual framework that would be further enhanced and developed using the empirical data. This empirical data would then be theoretically developed and interpreted using Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach. Amartya Sen's idea of not confining the capabilities to any particular set or outcomes, but understanding them in light of the context, leaves us with an evaluative space that is useful for exploring the wellbeing phenomenon in small entrepreneurial firms. An evaluative space offers us the possibility of studying agency principal relationships, such as those between employees and entrepreneurs in fast moving and fluid environments. The nature of work and working relationships in small firms are extremely free-flowing and continuously evolving and changing. They are often unstructured, and unlike larger firms where people have defined, competency-based roles, smaller firms tend to rely on sharing and collaborative forms of working where the collaboration is a function of the fulfilment of personal aspirations mixed with organisational objectives. The loose structures and proximity to the entrepreneur offer employees greater possibilities of tying up their personal aspirations with objective job-related requirements. There is consequently much more awareness of the dynamic capabilities of individuals working closely with the entrepreneur. Thus, the wellbeing of individuals in these firms is crucially dependent on relationships and also on individuals investing time, effort, personal aspirations, hopes and desires in these close relationships. Figure 4 below figure summarises the path I took to design my research; develop, find suitable and relevant epistemology to guide my work, identify appropriate methods, including data collection techniques, and connect them all to my research objectives. This paves the way for the next chapter, where we discuss the background and contextual factors of each case study organisation.

Figure 4: A Summary of the Research Process



## **Chapter Four: An outline of the case study organisations and some initial findings**

### **4.1. Introduction**

The contextual and empirical findings are discussed over the next two chapters, chapter four and five. This chapter will offer an outline of the context and profile of the three case study organisations that participated in the study. The evidence used in this chapter is an amalgamation of both primary and secondary data sources. The secondary data was collected from various sources like company brochures, policy books, website, other relevant materials and the primary data was collected through participant observations and face-to-face interviews. This data has been arranged under headings obtained in relation to the literature review conducted in chapter 2. It helps us to gain a better understanding of the contextual background and baseline descriptors about all the three small entrepreneurial organisations.

Each case study begins with an introduction where in the internal culture is explored, moving on to explaining the management structure, existing policies and procedures and approaches to workplace wellbeing. Additionally, lay descriptions of wellbeing as expressed by the participants also form a part of this chapter which helps us gain an overall understanding of how people within small firms interpret wellbeing at work. This chapter also looks at the the coding structures from each study, showing how I progressed from raw data to analysing the data using Gioia Methodology to present the evidence with utmost accuracy and consistency for each case study. The lay descriptions of wellbeing are important because it gives the understanding of the individual's perception about their wellbeing at work. This subjective view of wellbeing explains and helps to put into perspective the experiences of the individual wellbeing at work. The first and the second order codes in these three coding structures have

various similarities and difference but they all amalgamate into same aggregate themes across three case study. These differences and similarities will be portrayed and discussed in-depth in Chapter Five. In this chapter I show how each case study has its own coding structure in order to demonstrate that the views and perception of the participants about the same concept or phenomenon was different and unique based on their experience and knowledge.

#### **4.2. Case Study I**

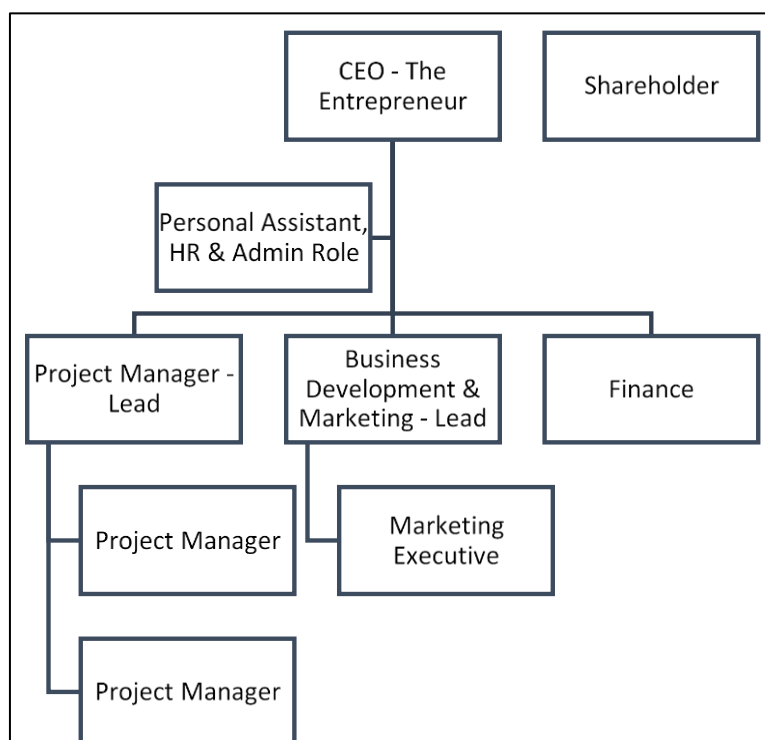
The first case study organisation is a social enterprise which is focused on addressing the social and economic problem of wellbeing and mental health of individuals working in organisations since 2003. This social enterprise was started by a passionate entrepreneur and life-coach with a team of eight people, who believed in eliminating mental health issues from the society and living a stress-free life. This small entrepreneurial firm provides new services through tailor-made training programs and wellbeing strategies for every organisational client, thus offering unique, customised value propositions for the client and for their own learning. This London based firm had recently been awarded one of the most prestigious awards by the London Mayor's office for creating social awareness about mental health and helping to build a more resilient and happier society. This acknowledgement meant a lot to this firm because there perceived this as a recognition for all the work they do and as a reinforcement of their social mission and vision. Case Study I also encouraged process innovation by involving and encouraging their employees to create new or different ideas and practices to improve efficiency and effectiveness at work. For instance, a new process flow for customer queries, was developed and implemented by one of the employees which significantly improved the delivery method and turnaround time, this transformation in process is viewed as process innovation (Davenport, 1993). In this firm, the employees identified and expressed their workplace culture using different

adjectives (both positive and negative connotations) such as flexible, free-reign, open, inclusive, double-faced, shared-value, creative, innovative, continuously changing, creating value (social), unbalanced.

#### 4.2.1. Management Structure

The organisational structure is vital to comprehend the context in which employees are working (hierarchy/authority chain) and their relationships with other employees (including their manager). The organisation claimed to not have any hierarchy, but they had divided the employees as per the different functions within the organisation (see the below figure 5). The overall functional organisational structure had an effect on how relationships transpired within the organisation especially the relationship between the entrepreneur and his team members. For instance, for few employees not having a hierarchy at work was a problem, because of accountability issues or not having enough clarity about one's roles and responsibilities.

Figure 5: Management Structure (Case Study I)



#### **4.2.2. Existing Policies and procedures**

The entrepreneur of this firm developed a 'code of honour' which acts as their basic culture within the firm and there are posters of the same put up in their office. This code of honour is seen by the employees as a 'basic ideology within the firm which states how one should act and perform at work'. The firm has some policies and procedures which they call 'work practices' like the flex-timings, dress code, compulsory lunch breaks, clean desk policy (every night the employees need to clear their desk and recycle where possible) and a rule which states that one can spend maximum fifteen minutes in the mediation room in a day. The practices are based on the belief of freedom of action and encourage their employees to think liberally and use their best judgement. The procedures encourage socially focused innovative behaviour as they respond to societal needs and changes to cope with crisis or recovery emanating from issues such as deprivation, alienation together with collective collaboration for the improvement of social relations (Moulaert et al., 2013).

#### **4.2.3. Approaches to Workplace Wellbeing**

In this firm, an approach to improving organisational effectiveness and high performance was achieved by providing various facilities to the employees. These facilities include the firm's open layout office with one closed meeting room and a wellbeing room which is used for meditation by the staff. They have a kitchen where there are facilities to heat your food, make hot beverages. The office is meat-free because the entrepreneur is vegan and he wanted the office to be 'pure and clean'. The firm encourages healthy and nutritious eating habits by providing healthy breakfast goodies, fruits and nutritious snacks for the staff to enjoy. The entrepreneur believes in Feng Shui, so crystals are placed within the office to 'maximise positive energy and balance.' The firm provides shower room for the staff 'to encourage them to cycle or jog to/from work or during their lunch breaks'. The entrepreneur has a pet

dog who is referred to as the 'office pet'; who visits the office occasionally because the entrepreneur believes that 'pets can help employees relax, often found to reduce heart rate and lower blood pressure.' The office layout and the plants within this space 'helps reduce anxiety/tension, depression/dejection, anger/hostility, and reduces fatigue' (see Danielsson and Bodin, 2008), as per the firm's research. The office has a centralised audio system which plays music 'because studies have found that listening to music improves one's mood and overall wellbeing which in turn increases productivity' (Ansdell and DeNora, 2012; Haake, 2006). These are only some of the facilities that the firm provides to the staff. Since this social enterprise works to overcome mental health problems and promote wellbeing, it encourages its own employees to be healthy, both physically and mentally. In this case, the employees did have facilities to be happy and positive at work, but some employees did not make the use of these facilities that were provided to them.

The firm's wellbeing strategy manifests in the provision of facilities and policies which were in place to encourage positive energy, health (physical and mental) and nutrition at workplace. As per the initial, pilot findings, there were many positive emotions (motivation, engagement, happiness) experienced by employees, due to the approach taken by the firm (which includes the facilities and the free-reign, creative, open and flexible culture) for the wellbeing of the employees. The pilot study led to the firm developing a written wellbeing strategy, whereas earlier they used above mentioned OD techniques and some quick fixes to tackle and improve wellbeing at work. The entrepreneur expressed the process of creating a wellbeing strategy as an 'ongoing process revolution and he said it was a cultural thing where the firm prioritises its people and puts them in the centre of everything'. So, the 'people' were the centre of their strategy and their wellbeing was of utmost importance. Their plans were to focus on open communication, establishing more cordial relationships at work, giving more



peer support, making clear job roles and responsibilities with space for growth and creativity and improving the relationship between the managers and their team. The firm demonstrated adaptability and agility by changing the internal structure and processes to improve employee wellbeing at workplace which also features of innovative organisations (Mitra, 2017).

#### 4.2.4. Lay description of wellbeing

The above themes provide us with some essential background information that is required in order to understand the organisational set-up, the existing policies and procedures and their approach to wellbeing at work. In this part, we explored the lay descriptions of wellbeing as per the perceptions and views of participants in this case study (Refer to Table 8 below).

Table 8: Lay Descriptions of Wellbeing by participants in Case Study I

Alex	Wellbeing is about family and balancing work-life.
Dave	Wellbeing is something we do not practise here, we preach about it a lot. For me money is important for my wellbeing
Sonya	Wellbeing means having support from manager...balancing time to brainstorm and research without being disturbed...having space and time to do your work... it means empowerment and having clear roles and tasks at work.
Lily	Wellbeing for is about allowing me... like just give time and space to do my work.
Inky	Wellbeing is knowing that your line manager cares and being able to be myself at work.
Katrina	Its stress, overload and more than that unclear of what is expected / lack of clarity, lack of knowledge or training about the role and having no guidelines to do stuff.
Luis (entrepreneur)	State where mental, physical, emotional, spiritual is optimised, and you can function well and is balanced. Culture of Empowerment and freedom. Wellbeing is to maximise their ability, facilities and resources. Culture - openness, trust, collaborating, honesty, shared values, loyalty, family culture where people care more than just coming to work. You need to do your 50% so if so do not prescribe to all this then there is no point.

Patricia	Just being happy I mean. Being able to do what I want to do and achieve in life. I like that I can be open here.
Natalie	Wellbeing is knowing that your organisation cares about you and that I have the freedom at work. I am happy that I am being able to achieve a balance between work and my family.

It is critical to know the unique employee perceptions on wellbeing at work for us to gain an in-depth understanding of the various meanings each individual has when they define or describe wellbeing. This is case study individuals refer to different aspects of wellbeing like hedonic<sup>1</sup> and eudaimonic<sup>2</sup> as well as stress and negative emotions. Individuals do mention the aspects of their organisational culture while describing their wellbeing at work. Importance is given to people and relationships at work, while expressing one's wellbeing at work. Most employees in this case study describe wellbeing on similar lines, this could be because of their nature of work, that is, being a social enterprise, which deals with mental health and wellbeing of individuals.

Now that we have seen these lay descriptions of what wellbeing means to the participants, I now delve further into the coding structure where I have thematically categorised the primary interview data based on the grounded theory analysis technique of 1<sup>st</sup> order, 2<sup>nd</sup> order and aggregate themes. This coding structure for each case along with the lay descriptions of wellbeing will help us analyse the evidence in a more detailed and in-depth manner (Refer to Appendix 4). The themes are colour coded for better visual presentation and understanding of how the participant quotes were interpreted and coded respectively. Shades of orange, blue and yellow have

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<sup>1</sup> The hedonic conceptualisation of wellbeing understands it as an experience of happiness, satisfaction, and avoidance of pain (Kahnemann et al., 1999).

<sup>2</sup> The "eudaimonic approach to wellbeing focuses on meaning and self-realization and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning" (Ryan and Deci, 2001, p. 141). This approach stems from Aristotle's work on eudaimonia, which states that real happiness can only be achieved when one identifies and develops one's virtues and lives in accordance to them (Franklin, 2010).

been used to represent all codes under the aggregate themes - The People factor, The Creative Process and Organisational policies, procedures and structure respectively. The data structures helps us understand the process of interpreting the raw data and coding them into categories which evolve from the data, branching into aggregate themes from the entrepreneurship literature.

#### **4.3. Case Study II**

Being entrepreneurial is about creating and growing both value and venture. This network-based community orientated public house (pub) business believes in value creation in terms of building social and cultural capital. The entrepreneur was passionate about his dream of creating a community space for the people in Colchester, Essex where most bars and public houses were commercial and were not serving the products, he was keen on. He saw an opportunity in the market for brewing his own unique beers and serving almost fifty different varieties of beers to create a new product-market domain. The entrepreneur manages his people in a unique way where he allows them to bring their personal identities to work, including their artistic or musical capabilities, which are showcased at the pub. This shows that the entrepreneur has allowed his employees to be themselves and improve their skills not just professionally, but also on a personal level. The entrepreneur encouraged and motivated his employees to achieve their personal goals in life. He did not deny them the freedom to express themselves as human beings and to express emotions at their workplace without being judged.

In this firm, the entrepreneur is passionate about brewing beers and has been doing so for thirty years, but this is his first attempt at running a fully-fledged business. He started this pub, which he co-owns with his wife, in 2015, and they have a team of six

shift workers. On weekdays only one employee is at the pub and is responsible for the whole shift, beginning at 4pm and lasting until midnight. Over the weekends, there are two or more employees behind the bar, including the owners, and there are musical performances most weekends.

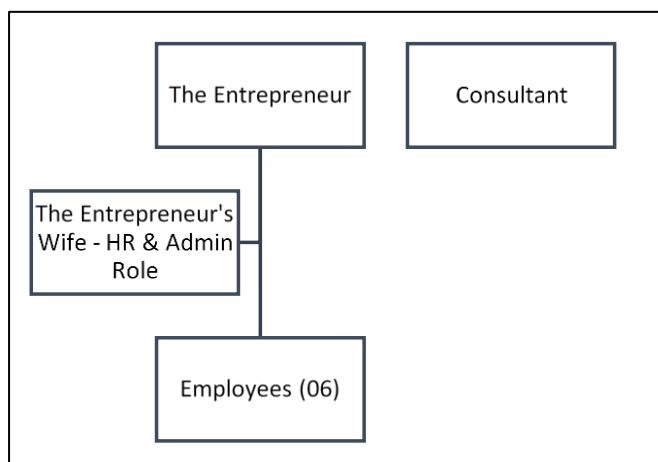
The owners have recently purchased a shop next door to expand their business. They are planning to convert it to a café serving food, and so they are trying to manage all the necessary paperwork and legal permissions to allow this. As per the consultant and the employees, the owners are new to all of this, and therefore they are a bit clueless about the business, but their intent is pure, and they wish to contribute to the larger community and make good towards society by providing a place for the community to come together and for talented individuals to showcase their art or other cultural interests. They have a consultant who mostly works for them pro bono, but does get paid at times, which is not fixed or documented anywhere. The culture of freedom within the firm enables it to be entrepreneurial and innovative. The employees identified and expressed their workplace culture using different adjectives (both positive and negative connotations) such as creative, flexible, having the freedom to choose, open, learning about new things, shared-passion, innovative, continuously changing, creating value (social and cultural), unbalanced, not-safe, lacks organisation and planning.

#### **4.3.1. Management Structure**

The flat organisational structure reflects the owner's approach to conducting business. The employees report directly to the entrepreneur and there is no middle management. The employees perceived this flat structure to have an impact on how they behaved and acted at work. For some employees, this structure had a more

positive effect on their wellbeing at work, because it made them feel there was a more open platform where they could share their thoughts and ideas. The negative aspect of having a flat structure was accountability issues. There are both positives and negatives identified by the employees regarding the structure and functioning within the firm.

Figure 6: Management Structure (Case Study II)



#### 4.3.2. Existing Policies and Procedures

The firm does not have many policies and procedures in place; they believe in freedom and doing things creatively as per their own free will. However, the owner's wife, who works full-time elsewhere, is always pushing for strict policies and procedures at work. She initiated the whole process of having a contract for the employees, but not all of her policies/procedures have been accepted willingly by the others. The entrepreneur himself disregards his wife's arguments because he wants this firm to be open and a place for creativity and innovation without any restrictions. This seemingly dysfunctional dynamic force between the couple is evident and is talked about not only by the employees, but also by the regular customers. The employees and especially the consultant get dragged into this "family drama" quite a lot, which in turn becomes stressful and frustrating for the employees.

There are basic health and safety issues that the firm has taken care of on paper, but it does not seem to be worried about this in practical life (there are issues of sexism and harassment towards the employees behind the bar from drunk/ill-mannered customers), thus potentially underscoring the lack of understanding of the seriousness of health and safety requirements at work. The absence of any practical problems may have reinforced this indifference to health and safety issues. However, the employees do feel that owners must look into the safety of their female employees whilst they are alone behind the bar due to the many harassment incidents and mishaps that have occurred without any action being taken to resolve them. This has an adverse effect on the organisational climate, which includes attitudes and beliefs that influence employees' collective behaviour, organisational culture and organisational strategies in terms of how this organisation identifies problems and plans action to improve organisational development.

#### **4.3.3. Approaches to Workplace Wellbeing**

The firm did not have an explicit wellbeing strategy in place, which tells us that the entrepreneur does not consider the wellbeing of his employees to be a current priority, or it could also mean that there is something implicit that the organisation does for the wellbeing of its employees. The reason for this was probably that they were a comparatively new business, only having been in existence for two years. The entrepreneur's perception of wellbeing was orientated towards the customers, society and community, and more externally focused. The employees' described wellbeing as all-round health – mental, physical and spiritual. This shows how subjective wellbeing as a concept can be. Here the entrepreneur describes his wellbeing to be more externally focused and the employees define wellbeing as an internal aspect of their

life. Words such as being happy, being safe, being independent at work, having good relationships at work, having a supportive work environment, having a positive work and life balance, were used to describe their personal wellbeing.

#### 4.3.4. Lay description of wellbeing

The lay descriptions of wellbeing can be related to hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing terms such as happiness, personal growth, sense of purpose, being capable of functioning. Here we can see more people describing wellbeing in terms of happiness, and for some people this is internalised (from within) and for some it is derived from other people and relationships they have. Since this firm had a community-orientated mission, that is giving back to society and contributing to the welfare and growth of the community, the entrepreneur's definition of wellbeing mirrors this, whereas the other employees talk more about other components of wellbeing (Refer to Table 9 below).

Table 9: Lay Descriptions of Wellbeing by participants in Case Study II

Danny (entrepreneur)	Contributing, I think, really, just being able to contribute to society in one way or another. To make people happy if not happy...less miserable
Elena	I suppose like your all-round health and in terms of like your mental health and physical. happy healthy, safe, that kind of thing, yeah. <i>Pause</i> . Yeah, I think how safe and happy I am at work is obviously very tied up with my wellbeing in general because I'm always quite aware of my mental health
Randolph	Wellbeing...If I would think about it simply...it's bodily and spiritual harmony to some extent. It's a link between bodily and spiritual interaction...defining it is complicated.
Harvey	I think personally, probably having a nice...again it depends on you because not everyone is capable of doing this but having a nice balance between things you enjoy doing, things you have to do, things you can plan for or would like to do because if it's just if I had to do my PhD all the time it's,...unless you really really really like it. But obviously there are things that are necessary that are sort of perfunctory even then it gets... so I think a balance between that and whether it's hobbies or some level of entertainment and the resting like yeah.... but it guess it would be easier to say

	personally because objectively, some people do not need whatever it is but, yeah. And actually, yeah, because I might have to give over my shifts for a while just to focus on the PhD and stuff because it's ...I do not work that many hours, sometimes I work more, like now. Normally I do 2 days sometimes 3 but even those 2 days like now, I'd be writing or other times I work, and that makes it more I do not know, sometimes it makes this more enjoyable sometimes more stressful.
Donna	Oh well, it could be always like positive or happy or whatever project we have and just carry on with that and knowing that we are getting good feedback from people that would also be it.
Rachel	I would like more confidence, more faith in myself, and I think that would both in like , I would like to get up and play sport again, both physically to have more confidence and as a person, more confidence, that would be my personal...I do not have these necessarily career related ambitions if that's what you are asking, I think that will happen as it happens to me. Personal growth is more important. My mental wellbeing.... well, I would really like to experience gender equality which is not easy. I think gender is a very big issue in my life, and in our lives. I would also like to stop feeling like I'm under a racist eye as a brown person in this country. I'd also like that I speak with more assertiveness. I just want to stop wasting my time emotionally sorting stuff out in my head and just be more vocal with my environment.
Tate	If Aristotle could not do it, I would not dare try. Oh, it's too chimerical. It's one of those things that you know when you find it. But finding it and describing it are two different things.

It is critical to know the unique employee perceptions on wellbeing at work in order for us to gain an in-depth understanding of the various meanings each individual has when they define or describe wellbeing. Now that we have seen these lay descriptions of what wellbeing means to the participants, I will delve further into the coding structure, where I have thematically categorised the primary interview data based on the grounded theory analysis technique of 1<sup>st</sup> order, 2<sup>nd</sup> order and aggregate themes. This coding structure for each case along with the lay descriptions of wellbeing will help us analyse the evidence in a more detailed and in-depth manner (Refer to Appendix 5). The themes are colour coded for better visual presentation and understanding of how the participant quotes were interpreted and coded respectively. Shades of orange, blue and yellow have been used to represent all codes under the aggregate themes - The People factor, The Creative Process and Organisational policies, procedures and structure respectively. The data structures helps us



understand the process of interpreting the raw data and coding them into categories which evolve from the data, branching into aggregate themes from the entrepreneurship literature.

#### **4.4. Case Study III**

A leading manufacturer of instrumentation for kinematic viscosity, this organisation holds a strong position in the world market in this field. The test results conducted by the instruments made by this company are used in product specifications, quality control and for optimising processes by industries across the globe. This small hi-tech firm is more than 30 years old and has always been a family business. The current entrepreneur took over this business from his father in late 1991 and since then he and his wife have been running this business. This Essex-based small entrepreneurial firm has around nineteen full-time employees and seven part-time employees on their payroll. The entrepreneur is extremely passionate about building new things with the latest technology. He believes that innovation lies at the heart of his business and that it is not just product innovation but also process innovation (both production and delivery process) that they focus on at this firm. For instance, the entrepreneur wished to streamline and adapt new ways of doing things within the factory, the laboratory and the warehouse.

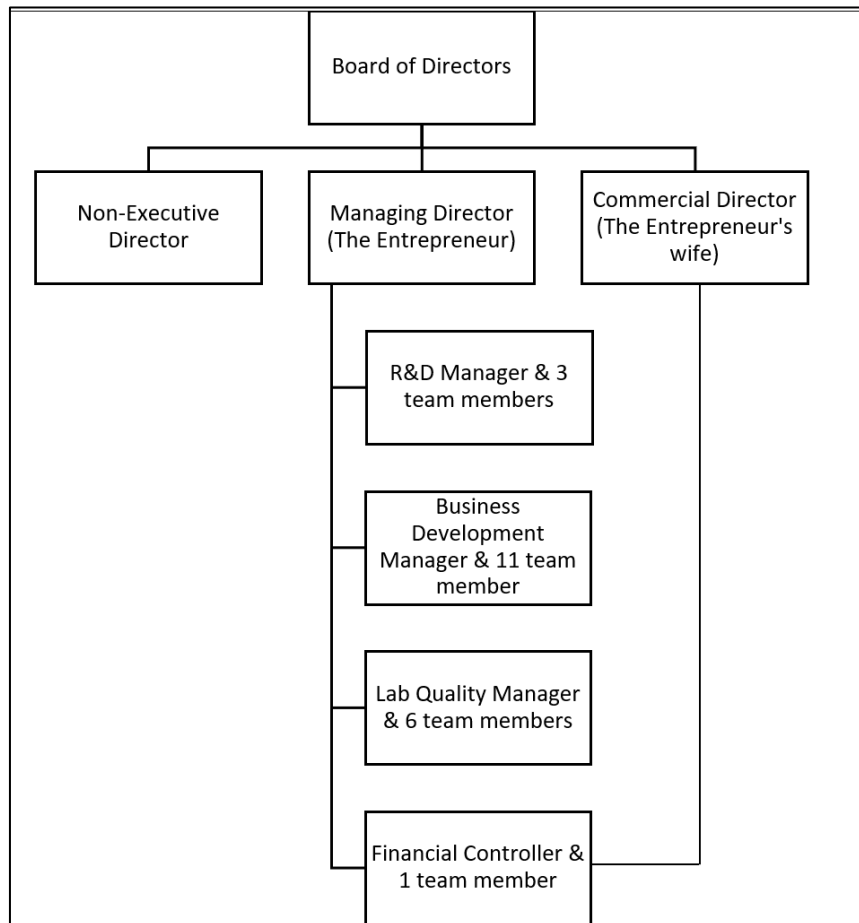
The entrepreneur also believes in taking a risk, whether or not it pays off in the end. He is extremely enthusiastic about his business and seizes most opportunities that come his way. At present, the firm has issues because it has been encountering various client-side technical issues, and they have become more reactive than proactive about their work. They are also facing some financial constraints because some

of their big customers are not paying their dues on time. This makes it impossible for the entrepreneur to pump money into R&D, which is extremely vital for this firm. They are desperately trying to change this scenario by hiring new talent, re-structuring their organisation so that the middle management will take on more responsibilities, and trying to manage their finances so that they can invest in R&D. The entrepreneur wishes to reach a stage where he would be able to focus solely on innovation and his middle management team would handle the operations of the company. Technology changes quickly, and this firm recognises that they need not only to get back into the competition, but also to innovate and invent something so unique that the industry would be enthused, and they would have the first-move advantage.

#### **4.4.1. Management Structure**

The organisational structure is vital to comprehend the context in which employees are working (hierarchy/authority chain) and their relationships with other employees (including their manager). This organisation had their structure based on different departments, each having line relationships and function relationships across teams. The company realised the gaps in their existing organisational structure and they kept reviewing and revising their organisational structure. There were both positive and negative people-related issues identified due to the management structure. One major issue with their structure is that the leadership is not taken seriously within this organisation. The employees at the middle management level need to start understanding their managerial role and implement it, and the communication should flow through this chain of command; something which is not happening currently.

Figure 7: Management Structure (Case Study III)



#### 4.4.2. Existing Policies and Procedures

This company has certain policies and procedures that have evolved over the years, and employees are expected to follow these, for instance, their accounting and bookkeeping process, the weekly meetings, the dispatch system. However, the culture within the organisation is relaxed and free, and so some people do not follow these policies or procedures because they feel it is not necessary. Most of these employees are the people who have been working in this company for a very long time, and they are used to doing things in a certain manner, but the newcomers want things to be more structured and organised. The entrepreneur's wife also wants to standardise the procedures and minimise the administrative time and wastage, but this is not in line

with the entrepreneur's passion of inventing new things and creating new products, which does not allow standardisation. This small firm is struggling to strike a balance between functioning as an informal/casual business and a formal business with policies and procedures.

The employees have different feelings about their health and safety within the organisation. A recent incident concerning a chemical spill was not handled well by the firm and the health and safety manager, the reason being that the firm was not clear on how to handle such situations and what the regulations were for the same. Therefore, as per the participants, the firm needs to have some essential policies in place, such as those for health and safety. This has some resemblance to the situation in Case study II. In both cases, there were health and safety measures in place, but the implementation was inadequate, and that was a big let down for the employees.

#### **4.4.3. Approaches to Workplace Wellbeing**

The firm did not have an explicit wellbeing plan or strategy in place, but they seemed to be associating the things they offer to their employees as an aid to provide positive wellbeing at work. The firm believes in providing various benefits and facilities to their employees in order to improve their organisational effectiveness and performance at work. These facilities include a dry pantry with tea/coffee making facilities, a cafeteria with cutlery, refrigerator, microwave and cleaning amenities, and clean and open working spaces. The organisation believed that paying their employees a monthly salary and benefits on a regular consistent basis had a direct influence on the wellbeing of the employees. Additionally, the entrepreneur provided the employees with monetary scholarships and funds to gain professional certifications and training from reputed institutions. This encouraged the employees to broaden their skillsets

and motivated them to update their knowledge frequently. The participants described their workplace as an enthusiastic, challenging and happy workplace. In this organisation, providing facilities and benefits to the employees were the basis of organisational development. This approach seemed like the approach in Case study I, however, the amenities were a bit different (for instance, the meditation room in case study I or the shower room facilities). Additionally, the financial aid to advance and become professionally certified made a difference in this case. At a later stage, we will be able to see whether this made a difference to how employees perceived their wellbeing at work. In this organisation, they also provided their employees with other perks, such as organising Christmas parties, staff lunch once a month (which they had not done for a while), the odd staff outing (they used these occasions to grow team spirit and make announcements, etc.), and they also wished to build training and development among the employees, so they encouraged at least one employee at a given point to undertake professional training, certification or qualifications. They do many personal things for their employees: letters for visa purposes, reference letters, and son on, which they believe also act as positive factors. They accommodate people who suffer from illnesses for quite long periods, and may give them loans and other support. All these activities and perks were considered as organisational development activities which would improve the wellbeing of the employees.

#### **4.4.4. Lay description of wellbeing**

In this case study, the participants who work in the factory have described wellbeing in a more health-focused manner, while the participants working in the office expressed wellbeing as having positive mental health at work. It is noticed that people use more hedonic conceptualisation, that is to say, experiencing happiness and satisfaction (Kahnemann, Diener, and Schwarz, 1999). In this case study, the

entrepreneur's passion for innovation is visible and he relates that to his wellbeing at work. There are some participants in this case study who talk about having a good work-life balance, which is a component of wellbeing as per their description (Refer to Table 10 below).

Table 10: Lay Descriptions of Wellbeing by participants in Case Study III

Sam	Yeah, for me it's the whole life...work is part of my life and impact on the rest of your life if you're not reasonable happy at work. I have to be able to make that differentiation between work and rest of life. I suppose for me my priorities are my home life with my wife, yeah that's where my wellbeing is. I have a faith as well, I am a Christian and that's a big part of my wellbeing but that also means contributing to others. My work here, I view in that context as well because it's a place where... because I've worked here 20 years I do know quite a lot of stuff and I can help the firm by passing it on and training other people so my work is important to me and also contributing to our customers, there's a lot of customers I know and it's important to keep them happy because we have a duty and commitment to them.
Riya	I would say making yourself happy but also making sure your team or colleagues are happy at the same time, not just think about yourself.
Justin	Well if I am going to say anything about myself, well, mmmm, I am not a very talented or a very intelligent person but I am very hardworking, I can get things done. Hardworking, in my perspective, is another form of intelligence. It's not in me, if I'm not a genius, I will say. If I am not a genius I do not try to be a genius. If that quality is not in me I am happy, but I can work hard which is in my control. The things which are not in my control I do not think and get worried about that, not even a bit.
Larry (entrepreneur)	Wellbeing is about being able to do new things and being happy. Having a balance.
Piper	Wellbeing is about balance, balance is important.
Martin	I would make one of my funny jokes and say I have not murdered anyone. Laughter and my very wellbeing is very much in the focus right now with what's going on in the company at the moment. I am making sure that my own wellbeing and health is not on the line, ....my own wellbeing is definitely looked after because...due to recently being rushed to A&E, they are not allowing me to do certain things, so I do not get exposed to it again. Some you can definitely see my wellbeing is more focused now that it's happened. Now that all of this acid thing has happened, they're looking more into it.
Ian	For me wellbeing is about health and attitude and that changes with age.
David	I suppose at the end of the day feeling I have accomplished something, not feeling too stressed. There are days where I get in

	the car and I am like thank God, it's five o'clock. Yeah, I suppose it's knowing I have done my job, I have accomplished something, the labs still running, the customers are happy I suppose. Everything works, nothings' gone wrong, nothing's broken, that's about it.
Nigel	Wellbeing? What at work? Well to be happy in your work, yeah. Job satisfaction makes you feel better, that's very important because it enables you to a level where I told you, you do not think, oh I do not want to come here tomorrow or oh god or...negative thinking, it's always positive thinking and you know, in the morning on the way her I am always thinking I have got to do this and that is what's the priority, what's the first thing I need to challenge and do that first, get it out of the way, get it done. Because the more jobs you can get done, you can tick off because you do not want to leave things sitting on a shelf oh needs to be done, needs to be done, needs to be done. Wellbeing comes from being happy at work really and the environment that you're in and here it's a very flexible environment were in, like I said if you want to talk to someone, you just go and talk.
Janice	my focus for our whole wellbeing is to stay healthy rather than happy and healthy but health means more to me than anything now but the fact that I can work again and have some money but also be healthy, that's just the icing on the cake. Wellbeing is related to being content.
Monica	Probably the whole day goes perfectly, you know but if it goes wrong, to me if pleases me if I have solved that solution. That makes me feel better. That makes me feel better about myself, so I become happier
Joey	Happiness - if you push hard enough I believe I can do lot more in life. I do not blame outside forces for my issues/fights in life - personal responsibility.
Janet	Comfortable and Happy
Mindy	Keep fit and healthy - physical aspect being able to jump and dance. Positive attitude, I do not like any negative. I cannot like being shouted at and be upset and I don't like confrontation. And I can't work in a negative environment and that's why I am happy here because here its more positive.
Andy	Sort of two part - The physical and the mental mindset of things. The physical is pretty self-explanatory. Your body is in good working order and when you're at work, you are not in any sort of physical strain etc. that is more than you can handle that's wellbeing on that side and the mental well like...not necessarily are you happy with what you are doing, but are you not upset do you not have any detrimental effects to your mental health what you're doing whatever it is that you are dining in your daily routine.

It is critical to know the unique employee perceptions on wellbeing at work for us to gain an in-depth understanding of the various meanings each individual has when they define or describe wellbeing. Now, that we have seen these lay descriptions of what

wellbeing means to the participants, I take you further into the coding structure where I have thematically categorised the primary interview data based on the grounded theory analysis technique of 1<sup>st</sup> order, 2<sup>nd</sup> order and aggregate themes. This coding structure for each case along with the lay descriptions of wellbeing will help us analyse the evidence in a more detailed and in-depth manner (Refer to Appendix 6). The themes are colour coded for better visual presentation and understanding of how the participant quotes were interpreted and coded respectively. Shades of orange, blue and yellow have been used to represent all codes under the aggregate themes - The People factor, The Creative Process and Organisational policies, procedures and structure respectively. The data structures help us understand the process of interpreting the raw data and coding them into categories which evolve from the data, branching into aggregate themes from the entrepreneurship literature.

#### 4.5. Summary

Until now, we have provided a case-by-case overview of the case study organisations in order to gain an understanding and background for each case study. Each case study organisation has different characteristics, but there are some similar patterns with regard to how individuals in such firms perceive wellbeing. Wellbeing was described using both hedonic and eudaimonic terms, as well as negative emotions and stress at work. This reinforces the argument that wellbeing needs to be explored and studied from positive as well as negative angles and the subjective view of the participant are vital in understanding how they experience wellbeing at work. The table below provides a summary of the above-discussed contextual themes of all three case study organisations.

Table 11: Summary of the contextual themes of all three case study organisation

Themes		Case study	
	I	II	III

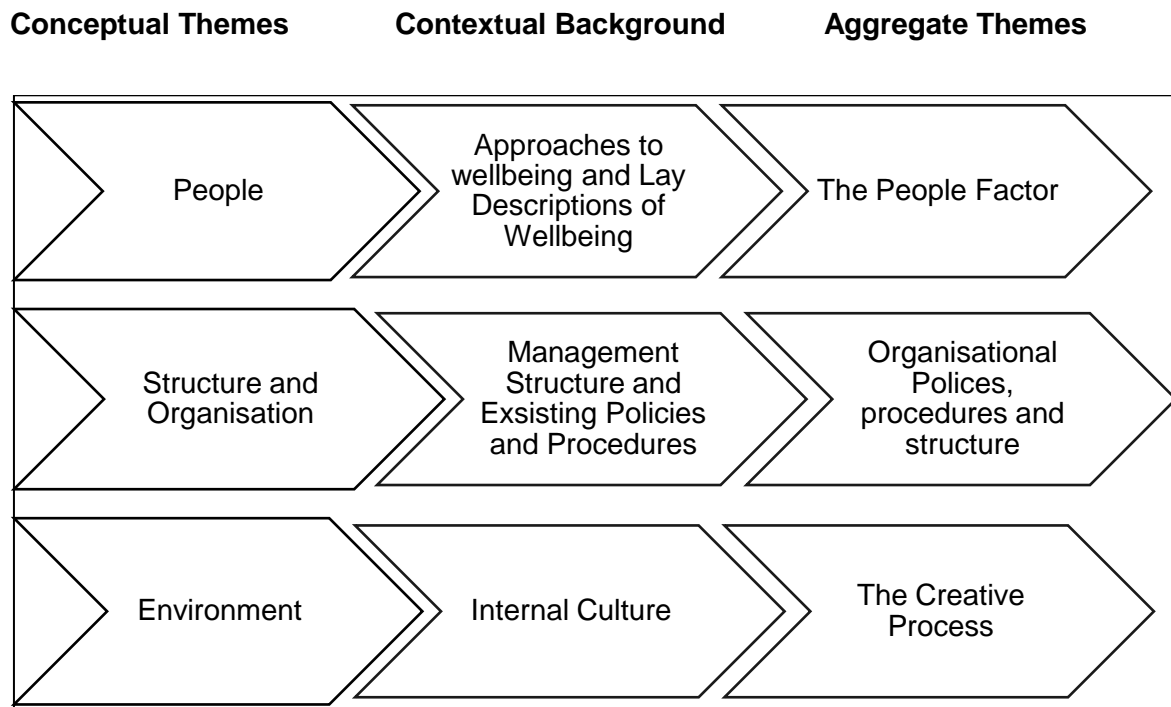


Approaches to Workplace Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open office layout</li> <li>• Meditation room</li> <li>• Dry pantry facility</li> <li>• Crystals and Feng Shui</li> <li>• Cycle or walk to work</li> <li>• Shower facilities</li> <li>• Walks during breaks</li> <li>• Pets allowed</li> <li>• Music while working</li> <li>• No written wellbeing strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New venture</li> <li>• Building social and cultural capital</li> <li>• Helping employees to bring their personal identities to work</li> <li>• Giving freedom at work was considered to improve wellbeing</li> <li>• Giving opportunity to network and perform at pub was considered to improve wellbeing of employees</li> <li>• No wellbeing policy or strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open working spaces</li> <li>• Dry pantry facility</li> <li>• Providing scholarships to employees for training courses and professional certifications</li> <li>• Paying salary on time, giving flexibility and freedom at work was considered as improving wellbeing of employees</li> <li>• No wellbeing strategy or policy</li> </ul>
Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic code of conduct (poster)</li> <li>• Flexi-timings</li> <li>• Compulsory lunch break for an hour</li> <li>• Clean desk policy</li> <li>• 15 mins per day in the meditation room (mandatory)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No written policies</li> <li>• Few procedures are in place (automated cash register)</li> <li>• Health and safety (issues with implementation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some policies and procedures were in place</li> <li>• Health and safety (issues with implementation)</li> </ul>
Management Structure	Functional Organisational Structure	Flat Organisational Structure	Functional / Departmental Organisational Structure

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

This chapter gives us an overview and contextual background for all three case study organisations. It helps us understand the background of the three case study organisations individually, by discussing their internal culture, management structure, existing policies and procedures, and approaches to wellbeing (if any). These themes help us understand the context in which these small entrepreneurial organisations are conducting their business. Beginning with the management structure which helps us to gauge the different roles and responsibilities of people within each firm. Moving on to gaining insights into the policies, procedures which advances our knowledge about the company's routines and structure at work. To complete this understanding, it is essential to understand the organisation's existing approach to wellbeing (if any) or their wellbeing mantra, which forms the later part of this chapter. Each case study concludes with a critical discussion of the lay descriptions of wellbeing as given by the participants and data structure derived from primary data collection (interviews). This tabular coding structure is inspired by the Gioia Methodology, giving us a more rigorous and in-depth understanding of how the participants' perceptions (quotes) translated into codes and aggregate themes. The next chapter will build on these themes in order to discuss the empirical findings. The below figure (refer to figure 8) provides us with an overview of how the themes were developed starting from the conceptual framework to the themes in this chapter and chapter 5 subsequently.

Figure 8: Overview of how the themes evolved



**Source:** \* Mitra (2013); Tidd et al (2013); Simon (2009); Westland (2008); Prahalad and Krishnan (2008) Kim and Maurbogne (2005); Galbraith (2004); Muzyka (1999); \*\* Ryff and Keyes (1995); Robertson and Cooper (2011); Reid and Ramarajan (2016).

## **Chapter Five: Thematic Discussion of the Findings**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The aim of Part I of the findings chapter was to introduce and provide a substantial background on the three case study organisations. The data used to write up the introduction and contextual background of these organisations were collected via secondary sources such as company brochures, PR or marketing materials, company policy book/SOPs (standard operating procedures), memos, company website, published news articles and photographs and from primary interview data. This background was followed by a summative view of the coding structure, which was developed from the raw primary data collected through the in- depth personal interviews conducted in all these case study organisations.

Subsequently, this section presents the findings by way of elucidation of the aggregate themes as per the coding structure across all three case studies, which helps us to understand the informants' meanings and experiences in each case study organisation. This chapter will give us an in-depth view of employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations through the eyes of the participants, experiencing and making sense of the whats, hows, whens and whys regarding their feelings about their wellbeing while working in a small entrepreneurial firm.

We can study entrepreneurial organisations by understanding a set of personal and impersonal elements including people, structure and organisation, and environment (Mitra, 2013). This study focuses on understanding employee wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations and therefore the second order themes and the aggregate themes used to analyse the findings are derived from the literature. As per

the literature, the components of entrepreneurial organisations/innovative organisations might include the people within such firms, the structure and organisation within these firms and the environment, which includes internal culture, climate as well as their external focus towards the outside world (Mitra, 2013; Bessant and Tidd, 2007). It is also mentioned in the literature that innovation is driven and enabled in such firms where the combined set of these components function together in a synergistic manner (Bessant and Tidd, 2007). The three aggregate themes identified in this study are the people, the creative process and the organisational policies, procedure and structure. The people theme is comprised of how employees experience various elements such as relational factors (including social networks, relationships at work, teams, certain cultural factors), their unique bond with the entrepreneur and various elements at work (such as autonomy, flexibility, proactiveness) which makes them feel they are responsible for their own work, which is related to their wellbeing at work. The creative process theme helps us understand the various patterns (both objective and emotional) which have elements such as shared values, creating new products, processes or services, importance of time and space at work, nature and intensity of work, empowerment, recognition at work and emotional demands, which all have a bearing on how the creative and innovative process within small firms occur. These elements are related to how employee wellbeing is experienced in small firms, and they also shed light on how and why these elements are seen as important in relation to experiencing positive or negative wellbeing at work. The third theme of organisation structure, process and policies, explains the various formal and informal structures (such as routines, highly-driven teams, person-company fit, work-life balance, continuous improvements and change, training, learning and development) and how these structures, policies or procedures help the employees to sustain their entrepreneurial spirit. These factors have a relationship with how the employees feel at work and how wellbeing is experienced. These themes help us answer our research questions by identifying and interpreting

individual experiences and the numerous facets of workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

The detailed responses from the interviews are organised around the concepts of relational assets (relational capital), ownership or entitlement, and relationships with the entrepreneur, with all three themes reflecting *the people* aspect of entrepreneurial organisations. Relational assets are potential resources, intangible and tangible, that could generate real or perceived value for the business through constructive relationships within (human and intellectual capital) and outside (social and cultural capital) the firm (Hormiga et al., 2011; Dalziel et al., 2011; Petrash, 1996, 2001; Roos et al., 2001). To comprehend the people aspect of entrepreneurial organisations, it is essential to also understand the various factors within the team that enable them to take up responsibility and ownership of their work, which has been seen as vital for individual wellbeing and for being entrepreneurial at work as per this study. The entrepreneurship literature falls short in understanding the relationship and dynamics between the entrepreneur and his employees; the importance of this dimension surfaced in this study as a very integral part in understanding the wellbeing of the employees working in small entrepreneurial organisations.

The next aggregate theme identified was formed by understanding the objective paradigms and perceptions or emotions related to *the creative process* within small entrepreneurial organisations. The participants identified various factors that affected their creative process within the firm, which subsequently had an impact on their wellbeing. The creative processes within small entrepreneurial organisations were considered vital from the employees' point of view, because this provided them with

the basis to be innovative, which in turn enabled them to create new products, new services or new processes (Mitra, 2013; Tidd and Bessant, 2012).

The last aggregate theme constituted the formal and informal *policies, procedures and structure*, which helps us understand the structure and environment within the entrepreneurial organisations, within which where there are policies and procedures relating to routines (Nelson and Winter, 1982), training, learning and development, having a good work-life balance (Robertson and Cooper, 2011), improving and evolving continuously (Tidd and Bessant, 2009), person-company fit, and so on, which all affect the wellbeing of the employees.

## **5.2. The People Factor**

This study focuses mainly on the people working in small entrepreneurial organisations, and various themes reflecting the people aspect of small entrepreneurial organisations surfaced during this study. The work-based relationships, relationship with customers, the relationship most importantly with the entrepreneur and ownership-related factors emerged as being important in the interview process.

### **5.2.1. Relational Assets**

The findings suggest that relationships at work or work-based relationships were extremely important for the respondents while discussing their wellbeing at work in all three case study organisations.

In case study I, the employees identified culture within the firm to be 'family-like'. Here, the participants meant that they felt as though the team was close-knit and that they

could share their personal demons with people at work. They even mentioned that if someone had an issue with someone else, they were able to fight or argue and sort things out because they knew it was coming from a good place, much as members of a family do. They mentioned that they were all so close, and they spent a lot of time together, but that was limited to their office space and they did not meet outside of work. This could mean that the firm promoted a feeling of being one family, but the employees did not specifically invest themselves in that thought outside of work. For them, it was merely about sharing the success and failures at work with each other or being able to openly discuss their views and opinions. Here, employees associate family with different terms such as 'having fun', 'discussing openly' or 'fight or argument but in good faith'. Some participants were extremely happy because the family-like environment enabled positive emotions and feelings such as sense of happiness, motivation, sense of sharing and engagement.

*Alex: "I chose to take the job because it seemed like a really good environment and really nice people really fun people and it's got a family kind of feel to it...we have been able to discuss with them whether or not I kind of get my opinion across or not and whether they actually come to anything we are still allowed to discuss it and I think there is a lot can be said for that. And when you have an issue with someone you can tell, and it is like a family. You do fight and argue but you know it comes from a good place...we are more engaged because of it, I guess."*

However, a few employees felt that these family-like ties meant that the lines between personal and professional lives were blurred. They initially enjoyed this idea of being a family, where they were very used to each other and were able to manage each other, and they found a good way of working like this. However, being one family made "things" very casual and there was no respect for each other's feelings or attitudes,



creating a stressful environment that adversely affected their wellbeing. This difference of opinion or perception may have been because of the distinct context and experiences of each individual. For instance, Sonya did not relate these close work-based relationships to positive emotions/wellbeing because her previous job(s) were in a bureaucratic environment where there was a clear distinction between personal and professional lives, with policies for code of conduct at work. Moreover, when she tried to understand this family-like environment, she related it to her relationship with her siblings, which had boundaries according to her, and would not negatively affect her wellbeing. Most of us act and behave in a particular manner based on our past experience, and we also constantly compare and contrast our present with our past experiences. Therefore, past experiences shape our current experiences, which keep evolving, and they also affect how we perceive things around us. We all have our own interpretation of a specific incident or phenomenon based on our past experiences and that is why we can see how work-based relationships developed at this firm and how participants perceived these relationships differently.

*Sonya: "One was based on personal relationships in the office just the way we treat each other the way we sometimes the banter in the office can get too much for me...I only learnt the word banter only once I started working here. Three years I never even knew that word and Luis (entrepreneur) asked me when I started are you ok with banter and he explained what it was, and I said yeah sure I used to do that with my brothers and sisters all the time. It sounds like a familiar relationship. But then when I learnt what it really was in the office then it quickly for me became like I cannot handle it this is... the line between banter and bullying or between banter and harassment or line between taking things personally and not seeing them as a joke is very thin and depending on how you or how I am doing that day mentally, sometimes I did take it personally. I sometimes felt, I am going to quit, and I do not want this. So that's*

*when I kind of spoke up and said I do not like this and now I have the reputation in the office that I am the serious one and I keep people in check and when it becomes too unprofessional then I will tell people to (laughs) stop.”*

The family-like culture defined how work-based relationships were shaped within this organisation, with the entrepreneur even playing a role in this family. Most employees within this firm accepted and embraced this culture, but in their own manner based on their individual perceptions. Moreover, some employees perceived the entrepreneur as a figure with authority and the ‘centre of the firm’. For instance, while discussing their relationship with the entrepreneur, a few junior employees at this firm mentioned that they could not handle the entrepreneur and his behaviour because they perceived him to be unapproachable and so they could not openly discuss everything with him. These junior staff members felt comfortable when their managers were around, and they shared a very open and positive relationship with them. Therefore, we could say that for these employees, the representation of family at work excluded the entrepreneur. Furthermore, and importantly, all participants, while expressing their views on the different aspects of their job, discussed their relationship with the entrepreneur as a key factor affecting their wellbeing at work (discussed in detail in section 5.2.2). Looking at the larger picture, this family-like attitude worked well to establish positive work-based relationships within this small entrepreneurial organisation. Only a few felt unhappy and frustrated (negative emotions) about this aspect at work, and these people either decided to leave the organisation eventually or they adapted to this kind of environment. This also means that small entrepreneurial organisations should pay close attention while recruiting people, keeping in mind person-company fit.

Case study II was entirely different from case study I, where we observed close-knit work-based relationships. In case study II, the relationships were very casual, and no one bothered much about the other colleagues at work. The interaction among the employees was minimal and only occurred when necessary. Therefore, it was seen that employees had very little obligation to behave cordially or create a good pleasant working environment for others. Considering there was the bare minimum of communication or relationship between employees in this firm, procedures and protocols defined for work-based relationships were formed. For instance, Elena felt extremely frustrated when one other employee with whom she did not communicate much or even see on a regular basis at work was leaving behind a mess by not clearing away the takeaway boxes after his shift. This shows how employees do not care much about the other employees and how they did not have the opportunity at work to bond or build a relationship with their colleagues. They clearly do not communicate or have a cordial relationship at work. It also suggests that a flexible and loose working environment and the absence of codified routines and procedures affect relationships at work, especially in such cases. Nevertheless, there were a few exceptions, because some people were friends even before they started working at this small entrepreneurial firm.

*Elena: "I hate it when they (another employee and his friends) leave takeaway, sometimes they stay till 4am after a shift and I come in on a Sunday and they have left half eaten takeaway boxes over there. And I really hate that because it stinks and it's really disrespectful but that's kind of what it's like. Everyone's just so relaxed and nobody cares."*

Until now, we have interpreted factors such as family-like culture or lack of policies and procedures considering the nature of employment (shift workers) influencing how work-based relationships are shaped and perceived with case studies I and II

respectively. In case study III, the nature and type of work was a dominant factor in how employees perceived their relationships with others at work. The employees working at the office (corporate) level were seen differently by the employees working in the factory. These issues were raised mostly from the workers in the factory because they felt that there was a clear division between them and the office employees. Based on their individual and collective experiences, the people in the factory perceived that the office staff had a superiority complex and they belittled the people working in the factory. This detachment was based on their job roles and job description, as the workers in the factory perceived the office employees were constantly showing off that they did the most important jobs in the company by selling the products and performing other operational activities. The factory employees perceived the presence of power dominance because of the organisational structure implemented. The workers felt that their work did not gain as much respect as an office job even though their work needed immense technical and creative skills. This divide was also creating conflicts because of individual attitudes towards others at work. For instance, once when there was an urgent delivery to be packed and shipped, the worker in the factory did not take the office employee's instructions seriously because he was doing another job which he choose not to put aside, as he perceived that this office employee was bossing him around; this internal conflict cost the company a customer and their reputation. Such incidences created a negative environment at work, especially between the office and factory employees.

*Joey: "generally everyone up here (at the office) I view as an acquaintance. They are people I know I get on with them, I do not try to get angry or show that I am upset with them if they have upset me or stuff but there are times when I would turn around and I would be a bit of an asshole but it's generally because they have done something to annoy me after I would mentioned, can you try not to do this because it stresses me out. So, majority of the people on*

*the top floor I view as work colleagues. Not really friends, they are just here, we all work in the same company, just try to get along.... being brutally honest, because people upstairs think they are better than anyone."*

In a nutshell, the experiences of relationships at work in the three case studies were distinct. What we can draw from these experiences are that family-like close relationships mostly worked but only if the workers were comfortable with the banter. The employees had little opportunity to build relationships and this led to dysfunction within the firm and the lack of respect and understanding between the two teams was detrimental to the firm achieving its business goals. From this we can say that small entrepreneurial firms have the opportunity to give the freedom to their employees to have close-knit relationships at work, but they should also understand and appreciate individuals' personal preferences and how well these individuals fit within their teams so that there are no adverse effects. Such firms should also provide resources for employees to cope with any wellbeing issues at work, especially those arising out of their working relationships, because teams are critical in achieving positive entrepreneurial outcomes.

Another significant factor raised by many employees was the importance of knowledge sharing for one's wellbeing at work. Being small entrepreneurial organisations, case studies II and III gave a lot of importance to sharing experience and knowledge within the firm. However, not all employees were in favour of this approach. For instance, in case study III, some employees felt that sharing their personal knowledge and expertise with others might negatively affect their position in the company. According to a few employees, others who did not wish to share essentially felt apprehensive about sharing their experience and knowledge with others in the firm. As per the

participants, since they were a small firm, many of them were engaging in multiple tasks and performing various roles at work; this could mean that many of them could do others' tasks as well. Therefore, to preserve their environmental mastery or technical know-how and to safeguard their position within the firm, some employees were unwilling to share their knowledge. This created issues for others in the firm, because they linked this to not having transparency and clarity with regard to how a specific product/service was designed or implemented. This also went against the idea of teamwork and giving an opportunity to other members to contribute and share their ideas at work.

*Martin: "Sharing knowledge is something that is what I look for personally (when asked what is important for your wellbeing at work). Always tell everyone else what you know in the company and what needs to be done which is more said for some other people in the company because sometimes, one big problem in the company is communication because if everyone shared, a knowledge sharing kind of aspect, I think things would go a lot more smoothly. People here do not want to share their knowledge at all. They feel threatened and insecure."*

As per the data, another noticeable thing was that for a few employees, their attitude towards others at work and their own traits were factors in being open and sharing their knowledge with others at work. This issue was seen more with employees with technical knowledge, who seemed to have different attitudes towards the entrepreneur and towards others at work.

*Piper: "Once when I asked this manager to explain a certain technical mechanism to me he was reluctant and suddenly when Larry (entrepreneur) asked him, he was more than happy to share. I think he feels like everyone*

*else wants to steal his knowledge. That is a bad attitude and we need to change that here."*

This re-enforces that individual attitudes and traits play a role when it comes to influencing how work-based relationships transpire and evolve, especially within small entrepreneurial organisations where we have smaller teams. This also brings us to person-company fit; in small organisations where knowledge sharing is so vital, should the firm be hiring individuals who are not willing to communicate or are not open to others at work? In this case, it was an individual's behaviour that acted as a barrier to knowledge sharing, but sometimes it might be a culture of distrust within the organisation that causes a failure in implementing knowledge sharing routines.

On the contrary in case study II, employees were readily sharing their knowledge and experience, but were not receiving the necessary motivation, appreciation or recognition for the same. In this firm, there was only one employee who had previous experience working in this field (public house) and this employee believed that the entrepreneur hired her mainly for this reason. This is the reason why she readily shared her knowledge and ideas with the team members and the entrepreneur, in order to make the firm a better place and for things to function smoothly. However, she does not seem to obtain much motivation in doing so, because the team members do not like to follow certain ways or rules in doing their work. She also felt that her efforts were going to waste, as they were not put to effect with complete efficiency by all, which also meant that other employees were not receptive to receiving her knowledge. Even though there were some glitches, she managed to put in place certain important things such as designing a menu card for the pub, which truly worked its magic and seemed to shock the entrepreneur when it did so. However, she did not feel like the entrepreneur really cared or gave her any credit or recognition for the odd

jobs she carried out at the pub. For her, this triggered negative emotions such as frustration and a feeling of disengagement from work, which not only affected the individual's wellbeing, but also the firm's overall wellbeing because there was a negative vibe and attitude floating around which would soon result in them losing an experienced employee. Reflecting back to the point where we noticed that the work-based relationships in this firm were merely formal and they had very little obligation to follow any rules at work, we have the following statement from Elena:

*Elena: "I am fairly experienced in hospitality and stuff so that helps. Danny (entrepreneur) hired me because of that I guess. Since he does not have any experience, I am the one who plays an important role here. He asks me a lot of stuff before doing it... but when I do something no one cares...they do not want to follow anything they just want to have fun...I get really pissed when I do not get any credit for what I do here...I am going to open my own pub soon and implement all my ideas there."*

Up until now, we understood how work-based relationships within small entrepreneurial organisations are perceived to be an important factor in influencing the wellbeing of individuals and the overall wellbeing of the firm. For instance, the relationships at work in all the three case study organisations had either a positive or a negative effect on the individual's wellbeing at work, with positive meaning in a manner where one could handle the relationships at work effectively and make the best out of the culture within the firm. Some individuals not only experienced positive feelings like happiness, engagement, motivation, personal growth, shared sense of belonging, but also saw these relationships as an enabler to function well within the organisation to attain organisational goals. Moreover, we understood how work-based relationships affect knowledge sharing within small teams, which played a significant part in the perception of an individual's wellbeing at work.



Moving from relationship with colleagues to rapport with the managers, this theme was comparable between case studies I and III considering their organisational structure, which were based on different departments, each having line relationships and functional relationships across teams. In case study I, most respondents suggested that the support and guidance of their line managers instilled confidence in them to take up new and bigger responsibilities and challenges at work, creating a lot of positive feelings such as happiness and motivation to learn new skills and broaden their horizons. Most employees felt that their line managers were willing to teach them and push them to do better while recognising their capabilities and learning aptitudes.

*Inky: " I feel my manager is willing to teach me and push me to do better after recognising my skills and ability to do work..."*

On the other hand, some employees felt that they had the push, but lacked guidance on how to carry it out. These were mainly the employees reporting directly to the entrepreneur himself. Such employees reported that there was a lot of encouragement to do new things and to be creative, to take on responsibilities, but they were lost because they did not know the path they were supposed to take to carry out these tasks. One employee (Katrina) in particular, felt stressed when she was not able to get the necessary guidance from her manager (entrepreneur), and according to her, this affected her wellbeing at work adversely because she was under immense stress and felt depressed and at times helpless. Katrina was mindful about how this lack of guidance affected her wellbeing at work and therefore she was one of the managers who made sure she led and directs her team to the best of her knowledge so that they were confident and happy at work.

*Katrina: "there is encouragement and there is even an expectation from people to do so but there is maybe not as much leadership in that sense of showing how you can do that or guidance on how to do that...I make sure I do not do the same with my team because I know how taxing and depressing it can be."*

In case study III, the relationships between managers and their team members were evolving considering that a middle management level had recently been implemented. Some managers in favour of this change were clearly disappointed with the managers who were not following this structure and so their team(s) were disrupting the communication channel and the chain of command that they were trying to establish here. Some managers even raised their concerns about the entrepreneur not encouraging the employees to follow this chain of communication, which made the manager feel undermined and frustrated (this is explained in more detail in the discussion about communication in the later section in this chapter).

*Sam: "I think it's a big problem in business if any individual has any more than one person to report to. I think anyone needs only one person to report to. If you're reporting to more than one person, it's inefficient, some people can be devious, it was not the case in this one. It just opens you up to all sorts of problems and also it confuses in the mind, the thing is it's only going to go one way because if they're reporting to me and to Larry (entrepreneur), they're going to see Larry as the important one because he's running the...so you know, inevitably, someone in my position gets undermined, it's bound to happen. That's the negative of it. Positive, I am doing a lot of things here so maybe sometimes it's done with the thought to help me, but it does not really"*

Furthermore, according to some relatively new employees, the older employees were resistant towards changing. They did not see a need to change things at the workplace because they felt that the older system worked very well, even today. For these older employees, these became routines that were stable and unchanging (Gersick and Hackman, 1990; Ashforth and Fried, 1988; Weiss and Ilgen, 1985) rather than routines that could evolve and be made more effective to meet the current needs and opportunities (Feldman, 2000; Senge, 1990; Cohen et al., 1996; Nelson and Winter, 1982). Moreover, some managers were extremely protective of their team members and they believed that their job was to give their team members a sensible workload so that they did not become pressurised or stressed at work. This was seen positively by the employees working under such managers and they respected the line of communication and worked very well within their team.

*Riya: "we are trying to implement in a different way we have the middle management and we are introducing that and those people are actually committing to that... but some people including some managers are not complying with it so how can I expect the team members to comply if the managers are not complying...these people have been there for a long time so they feel all these new advancements are a waste.."*

Relational capital or assets involve not only internal people but also the network and relationships with the customers, external stakeholders, societies and communities (Nichter and Goldmark, 2009; Lechner et al., 2006; Gulati, 2007). In case studies I and II, the relationship with the customer was vital to an individual's wellbeing at work and for the firm, where co-creating a product or an experience with the customers enabled them to create value through the process of socialisation (Prahalad and Krishnan, 2008). Since case studies I and II were service-orientated organisations, customer engagement and positive customer feedback played a role in how the employees felt

about themselves and their work. In case study I, the employees were extremely motivated and happy when they received valuable and positive feedback from their clients. Since they were a not-for profit organisation, it was not about tapping more business, but was about making a positive change in the community and helping more organisations to be mindful about stress and mental health issues at work. This gave the employees a meaning and sense of purpose for the work they were doing.

*Sonya: "when a client shares their feedback and books more training modules, it's a kind of a high which is overwhelming. It motivates us to do better. We have a close relationship with all of them...we feel like we are making progress in making people aware about mental health issues... stress in particular."*

In case study II, the employees have the freedom and opportunity to interact with their customers, which fulfilled their personal needs of socialising and building their personal networks. This meant that the small entrepreneurial firm provided them with a platform on which they could meet their personal goals as well as the organisational goals. The employees felt that they were co-creating a service experience for the customers at the pub, which in turn motivated them to serve their customers better and to generate network ties for the firm. Most employees were positively affected when they received customer feedback or when they interacted with their patrons personally. The positive associations were having a sense of purpose in the work they do, feeling happy, engaged and motivated at work because they were closely interacting, and getting involved with their customers on a daily basis.

*Tate: "We have an amazing relationship with our customers...we talk for long hours. They are like a part of us...they can play music they love, drink the beer they love and it's like a party every day."*

The backbone of this firm was the personal ties and networks they created and built within the community (who were also their customers). Here, the entrepreneur was extremely passionate about building strong network ties within the community through his public house (pub) by encouraging budding artists to perform and showcase their talent at their venue. His orientation was towards building a place where everyone from the community could contribute and feel at home. This sense of giving back to the community was a crucial factor in how he interpreted his happiness and positive wellbeing at work. He felt that there was a sense of purpose and meaning in what he was doing with his business and that it was not like any other commercial pub. He experienced positive wellbeing where he was happy, motivated and engaged with his customers and the community as a whole.

*Danny (entrepreneur): "..... being a proper part of the community and a bit of a hub for things, for events ...I said you are more than welcome to come and do something on the stage here... we have had cabaret here.... We have had proper rock bands here; we get singers...It is about bringing everyone together...It gives me a high... like a drive, then I am like extremely happy and all motivated to do more and more and more..."*

Most of the employees were artists who were given various opportunities to perform and display their talent. This was seen by employees as a contributing factor for positive wellbeing at work because they could bring their personal goals and interests to work and the firm gave them the platform to promote their interests. This brought about feelings of positive wellbeing such as happiness, personal growth, experiencing meaning and sense of purpose at work.

*Randolph: "BH (organisation) has given me new friends, I even started working with this guy who came in as a customer. We both love poetry and we meet*

*here. He then brought in his friends and it just keeps building this way. I love that about here... I even perform (recite poetry) sometimes and that makes me really identify with this place...I belong here..."*

In all three case studies, these work-based relationships or relationships with the customers were based on either intangible behavioural practice (family-like bonds with colleagues in case study I or a close relationship with customers in case study II) or normative structural reasons (hierarchy and line of communication in case study III). In case study I, the work-based relationships were identified or defined by the organisational culture of a 'family-like' environment, which gave them their identity within the organisation and helped them develop relations at work. This element had an effect on how employees experienced wellbeing at work; for some it led to positive feelings of happiness, positive relationships, a sense of belonging and engagement, but for some it meant unhappiness, stress and negative wellbeing at work. In case study II, the relationships at work were based on the nature of the business (shift workers), and therefore most of the employees did not particularly see these relationships as important or necessary for their personal wellbeing at work. However, for some employees, the relationships at work were not positive because they became stressful and unhealthy, which in turn affected how they felt at work. In case study III, the organisational structure outlined the work-based relationships; that is to say, the divide between the office and factory employees had an impact on the wellbeing of some employees in that organisation. These employees felt a lack of acceptance within the firm, and unhappiness and stress when their relationship with employees at the office was tense.

Until this point, we have discussed various relational assets that small entrepreneurial organisations focus on developing in order to achieve their organisational goals. Relational assets are associated with inter-firm behaviour and relationships with external stakeholders (such as customers) which depend on intangible and behavioural practices (Dyer and Singh, 1998). Relational assets act as an advantage to businesses, especially small entrepreneurial organisations that have limited resources, and focus mainly on their customers and networks in order to function smoothly (Nichter and Goldmark, 2009; Curran et al., 1993). In the abovementioned findings, we can see that relationships within the firm and with the customers act as an integral part of an employee's wellbeing at work, which in turn affects the business. These small organisations therefore need to look at relational assets (that is to say, better associations with customers and close working relationships of their employees) through the lens of wellbeing in order to gain a competitive edge over their larger counterparts.

### **5.2.2. Relationship with the Entrepreneur**

Traditionally, entrepreneurship research was based on the heroic and iconic entrepreneur who created new ventures as a 'one man show' where entrepreneurs were the 'creative destructors' (Schumpeter, 1934) using their individual ingenuity (Tang et al., 2012) and social capital (Florin et al., 2003) to generate opportunities (Alvarez et al., 2013) or even to discover them (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). More recently, some researchers are bringing about a shift in this perspective by not only studying the entrepreneur but also his team (Klotz et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the role of employees in the entrepreneurial process of creating the new and their relationship with the entrepreneur is yet to be grasped fully. This relationship between the entrepreneur and his employees was one of the most significant and valuable themes that emerged across all three case study organisations. Each participant

across the three case studies had a different perspective and views about their relationship with the entrepreneur and how his/her behaviour affected their wellbeing.

The entrepreneurs in all three organisations were approachable and there was always an attempt to keep communication open and clear. Nevertheless, there were instances where there was confusion and miscommunication between the entrepreneur and his employees. In these circumstances, the employee felt disregarded and unaccepted within the team.

In case study I, the entrepreneur often assigned the same work to various employees with the idea that the work needed to be completed as soon as possible. However, this created a sense of disrespect and the employees felt undervalued when they found out that someone else had also been given the same work. They perceived this negatively by assuming that the entrepreneur thought that they were incapable of completing a task assigned to them, which in turn affected their sense of purpose at work. This built a stressful environment not only between the entrepreneur and the employee, but also between co-workers.

*Sonya: "Once Luis (entrepreneur) gave me a job to do but he was not so clear about when he wanted it done...he went to Natalie and gave her the same job within a few hours...made me feel little, as if I was not capable..."*

This also reflects the level of trust between the employee (Sonya) and the entrepreneur. Many employees in this firm were positively affected by the family-like culture, unlike Sonya, as she had some issues with this kind of culture and the blurred lines at work. This could be the reason why she felt offended when the entrepreneur gave one job to her and then the same job to another employee, because for her she wanted things at work to be extremely professional and clear. She also did not share



the family feeling as most others did, and so for her it also seemed difficult to sort this matter openly with the entrepreneur, which built negative emotions and de-motivated her at work.

In addition to communication, it was seen that trust and honesty were associated with being transparent and open at work. Entrepreneurial organisations are known for having a sharing culture, sharing their information, values, and vision (Tidd and Beasant, 2013), which in this study meant that it reduced unwanted problems at work, helping employees to focus on their main line of business and be as creative as possible.

Both case studies I and II adopted a non-hierarchical operational system only when it suited them to do so. This implied that the entrepreneur decided when to introduce his authority and when to let the employees make their own decisions. This flexible nature of hierarchy was the issue in case study I, which negated the sense of a shared value system where everyone's needs, and values were accepted and considered while determining the shared value system at work. Some employees felt that they did not want to make decisions based on someone else's (entrepreneur) beliefs and they felt as if the organisation was pushing them to believe in something that they did not believe in (in this case vegetarianism). Moreover, it challenged the family-like culture within the organisation where everyone felt that the decisions were made together and amicably as one big family. The employees also felt that they could raise their opinions about matters at work, but whether the issue actually received any attention was questionable.

*Inky: "Luis(entrepreneur) is vegan so we are not allowed to bring meat into this office...he did not even ask us our opinion...it was a decision pushed down on us...which is so opposite...we all take decisions together."*

In case study II, communication was also seen as an important factor and most employees felt that there was a lack of communication, which affected their work and their personal wellbeing. Here, communication was interconnected with issues such as not having a system in place or policies or procedures at work, and the dynamics between the entrepreneur and his wife. As per the employees, these issues affected their relationship with the entrepreneur and how this relationship affected their wellbeing at work is discussed further.

This organisation did not have systems in place, so they communicated with their employees regarding their shift times or any other work-related information via SMS. This made it difficult to check whether all the employees had received the message and whether they had read the message and understood it. There was always this gap that was identified by both the employees and the entrepreneur's wife, who generally sent out these messages. The entrepreneur's wife mentioned that she felt that some employees lied even though they had received the communication simply because they did not want to do their work. For instance, once a communication had been sent out regarding a consignment of products coming in and as per the entrepreneur's wife, the said employee ignored the communication, which disrupted the working of the pub because the products were lying in storage. This disruption at work affected the wellbeing of the entrepreneur's wife at work and she was extremely stressed as her employees did not follow the procedures that she was trying to implement for the smooth functioning of the pub.

*Donna: "It's very stressful sometimes very stressful. You keep telling the guys you need to follow these processes and some people are good and they do it but other people who have been working since the time we opened, and they still do not do it and I said to them I do not want to be begging you and tell you why do you not record the money? How do I know how much money was made? You rang up everything, but I do not have the total. This brings me to the stuff from the beginning and the constant checking. Oh, I forgot. I said how can you forget to write the total, so it's something like that and sometimes they forget to record things of importance. Sometimes if we have received some deliveries they do not tell us. The deliveries will be left at the back and people are coming and we lose like full crates of beer. It's a lot of money so it's a big responsibility. I'm texting them we have a delivery today, the glass man is coming, can you please be there, can you please be there and open the door because I cannot be there. I have bills to pay I have a mortgage and everything, but no one responds."*

This issue of lack of communication and trust not only affected the entrepreneur's wife's wellbeing, but also affected her relationship with the entrepreneur. She mentioned in her interview that she felt as though the entrepreneur disrespected and undermined her authority in front of the employees, which caused her to feel very sad and stressed out because the employees treated her badly and would not listen to her or see her as an individual capable of making decisions or commanding authority at work. She has another job which entails doing things as per rules and procedures that are laid down, which makes her job easier and clearer. Therefore, she had been trying to bring in that clarity and order to functions at the pub. However, the entrepreneur is a free-spirited individual who wants to give his employees the freedom at work and do their work in their own manner. Here, there is a clash of how the entrepreneur wants

to run his business and how the wife wants to put some procedures and rules in place so that it functions smoothly.

*Donna: "Danny (entrepreneur) does not understand that we need to have some policies and we need to follow some rules here...He thinks giving everyone freedom is the best way to do things... But we are facing issues now and he just does not care I feel... he thinks I am trying to dominate and take charge...he shouts... they see this and then they also do not want to listen...or follow the process...i feel stressed like how this is going to work like this...I am sad that he does not understand my point."*

This dynamics or dysfunctional relationship affected the wellbeing of some employees because they were dragged into their conflicts and arguments without any reason. Some employees felt trapped and stressed out because individually their personal traits, for instance confrontational issues, made it difficult for them to get out of these situations without harming their wellbeing at work. After such incidents, a few employees felt like their relationship with the entrepreneur had also changed, because they were put in such unpleasant and stressful situations by him. This too reflects on the relationships at work, where there is extremely little obligation to provide a positive and pleasant working environment for others. There were negative emotions such as frustration, stress, anxiety and unhappiness that surfaced because of these issues at work.

*Rachel: "Danny (entrepreneur) and his wife have some issues. I think it's because they both want to run this place differently. She wants more rules and she wants to control things around here which he does not agree with...there is a clash and that affects the employees. Some get pulled into their fights...unwantedly...then they become all worked up and stressed then*

*someone needs to cool them off...most of us feel they should do this outside of work...keep it away from us because then we form opinions... it affects everything..."*

On the other hand, employees also related communication to transparency, trust and honesty within the firm. In the above section, the entrepreneur's wife mistrusted the employees and she thought that some employees were lying to her. The employees also felt the same about the entrepreneur because he did not truly and openly share the financial condition of the pub with them. This challenged the shared culture system where everything was shared openly, including information relating to the survival and growth of the business. Some employees felt they could not trust the entrepreneur because they felt he was not only hiding this information but was also misrepresenting the facts in a way that led everyone to believe that the business was not doing so well. It was not about knowing the personal gains of the entrepreneur, but to know whether the business was going to survive and grow in the future. Some employees also had their doubts about the managerial capabilities of the entrepreneur, so when the image of not making enough money was portrayed, this reinforced their view that his inability to manage the business could be the reason for the firm not being financially feasible.

*Rachel: "There is no way of knowing what kind of money Danny (entrepreneur) and Donna (his wife) make but that's not really the question, the question is that the projected image is that they do not make enough and that influences everything. They are not open about it with their own employees."*

In case study III, the organisational structure had been formed very recently and until that point, every employee in the company had an open-door access to the entrepreneur in terms of the flow of communication, which included discussing their

tasks, seeking solutions to their problems at work or even talking about their annual leave. Some employees who had been with the company for a long time kind of enjoyed this open-door culture, so even after implementing the new organisational structure and a chain of command, some employees went directly to the entrepreneur instead of their managers and the entrepreneur did not object to this either (which motivated the employees to continue doing the same thing). In the case below, we can see that Sam felt insecure and he perceived this incident as his authority being undermined in some way by his subordinate and the entrepreneur himself. This created issues such as miscommunication and the managers felt stressed trying to address these complications and to follow the chain of command. Thus communication, or lack thereof, was identified by most employees as a major issue in this firm, and this affected their personal wellbeing and happiness.

*Sam: "I think less than a month ago I saw him (entrepreneur) talking to people and said why are you talking to people in the lab? And he said, oh, they're coming to me with this and that and I said, if they come to you, just send them to me, just shut that door to communication. He said oh that's fine with me but then a month later you realise you were back to where you were. So, you just have to work with what it is. As I said, it's very, very hard to get a new culture in permanently."*

To summarise, in case study I the issues with communication were linked to work-related tasks and flexible hierarchy; the employees doubted their capabilities to perform a task due to the lack of communication between them and the entrepreneur, and they also felt as though authority was imposed when necessary. This affected their personal wellbeing in relation to hindrance in personal growth, low autonomy, trust issues and disengagement from work. In case study II, the communication issues were related to the organisational policies and procedure. Since this firm did not have

reliable systems in place, it was difficult to communicate and make sure the work was done. This affected the employees' wellbeing by creating high stress levels at work, unpleasant working conditions, frustration and lack of a sense of belonging. In case study III, it was more a procedural and structural issue related to communication. The new organisational structure was expected to open up the communication channels and streamline them, but instead it posed challenges to effective communication within the firm.

Communication was key to solving issues and restoring trust, honesty and transparency within the organisations, which affected the wellbeing of employees at work. Miscommunication or lack of communication led to high stress levels, anxiety and negative emotions at work, which might possibly lead to high levels of absenteeism, health issues and lower levels of productivity. Small entrepreneurial organisations are close-knit, and they have smaller flexible teams compared to large corporations, where there are standard operating procedures that everyone simply needs to follow. Therefore, it is important for them to realise the importance of communication for achieving the desired entrepreneurial outcomes in smaller organisations. This also brings us to understand the need for a balance between entrepreneurial ability and managerial capabilities within small entrepreneurial organisations.

In all three cases, the respondents linked the behaviour and character traits of the entrepreneur to how they behaved at work and in turn how they felt about their own wellbeing at work. The passion of the entrepreneur was perceived to be infectious, and it influenced the employees positively. For some, however, there were also negative effects such as undue pressure, stress, frustration, unhappiness and anger.

In case study I, the employees believed that their freedom was curtailed by the entrepreneur's habit of micro-managing work and shooting down their creative ideas based on resource constraints. Although they were excited and happy with the entrepreneur's ideas and passion, which gave them a sense of purpose, they wanted strategic direction for their specific activities. While they were encouraged to act as creative agents in such a highly driven organisation, there was a lack of alignment between the need for outputs and outcomes and being creative, which had a negative effect on wellbeing. In this firm, there seemed to be a dilemma in the entrepreneur's mind about whether he actually wanted his employees to act as creative agents or merely execute and implement his creative ideas at work. Some employees had an issue with the entrepreneur conjuring up new ideas regularly and expecting them to develop and implement them immediately. Such expectations frustrated them because they could not complete their day-to-day work in these constantly changing circumstances. Newcomers took a while to understand their functions in relation to the demanding expectations of the entrepreneur and the managers acted as a buffer, as discussed earlier. As explained above, in this case their managers were helpful, especially for newcomers who were not in managerial positions.

*Alex: "... he (entrepreneur) is like a child who is in his imaginary world with his imaginary things, they want to do and it's all over here and all over there and it's just a mess all over the place."*

*Lily: "Luis (entrepreneur) is like the centre of the office and he is always the one who can make everyone very stressed. As a CEO he loves to micro-manage and he loves to (repeats twice) delegate the same things to different people because he needs to get stuff done."*



In case study II, the employees expressed that the passion of the entrepreneur was having a positive effect on their wellbeing and happiness within the firm. They felt that the passion trickled down to them from the entrepreneur, which in turn made its way to the pub's customers. The entrepreneur was extremely passionate about his beers and he would brew all of them himself at his brewery.

*Danny: "I have been doing this about 30 years. The interest in beer goes back many many years back, the teenage years. How you make so many different types of beers out of just 4 ingredients. The sort of alchemy. How do you get all the different flavours and profiles and characteristics?"*

The employees felt that the entrepreneur took pride in explaining to them about his beers, down to the smallest details. This made them feel the same pride and passion for the products they were serving behind the bar. This also made them feel like they were well-equipped to serve and answer any questions the customers had in terms of their beer. The employees felt more capable and knowledgeable about the products they served at their pub, which was perceived as important for their personal growth and professional mastery.

*Sasha: "Danny (entrepreneur) his passion for brewing beers is amazing to see. The way he talks about it and he is totally into it. We can make out how much work he puts into making these beers and he brews it himself...he loves what he does. He shares all of that with us and we feel the passion and we know a lot more about the beers we sell, that's good too."*

In case study III, the entrepreneur's wife, who was also on the board of directors in the firm, was quite critical about the lack of balance within the firm – the balance between creating new products/generating new ideas (being entrepreneurial) and routine day-

to-day work activities/operations. She believed that the entrepreneur needed to understand and get the balance right in order to function more effectively. She also highlighted a possible issue that the firm employees faced, which was committing themselves to unrealistic deadlines. Most of the time, it is the entrepreneur's passion that motivates the employees. She states that the entrepreneur has a unique ability to make the employees commit beyond their ability (for instance, agreeing to a deadline when they clearly know that they cannot fulfil it), as a result of which the employees often fail to achieve things, which causes them to feel frustrated and stressed at work. She believes that this also hinders the creative process within the firm.

*Piper: "Unfortunately, Larry (entrepreneur) has the ability to make people commit beyond their ability whereas the perfect leader in my view is the one who has to ability to make people commit to their ability and surprise themselves with their ability, but what he does is he continually makes people commit beyond their ability and they make horrendous mistakes and I think that's a key part of our problem. People who are here they all are motivated, loyal and they all want to achieve things but because we are pushing them beyond their ability they get frustrated."*

Her views highlight perception of the kind of relationship the entrepreneur shares with his employees. Considering this is a family-run (husband-wife) business, the wife's role in the firm is vital in terms of operational activities; and her understanding of the firm from a non-entrepreneurial role gives us a rounded and to an extent unbiased view of the relationship between the entrepreneur and his employees. She not only understands the entrepreneur at a professional level, but also at a personal level, which gives her an in-depth and overall understanding of the personal characteristics of the entrepreneur and his behaviour. This is a different entrepreneur-wife relationship to the one we see in case study II, because here the entrepreneur is affirmative

towards his wife's critical viewpoint about his behaviour, whereas in case study II, as per the wife's perception, the entrepreneur disrespects and undermines her viewpoint, which had an adverse effect on their relationship and her wellbeing at work.

The entrepreneurship literature celebrates the entrepreneur and glorifies his achievements (Braun et al., 2017), but it fails to talk about the relationship that this heroic icon has with his own people who work with him to build his business. In this study, this relationship has come to light with various pros and cons in terms of positive and negative workplace wellbeing. On one hand, the passion of the entrepreneur is shared by others within these organisations, which results in shared values, innovation drive, high team involvement, passion and growth, while on the other hand this same passion can be seen as detrimental to the wellbeing of employees if it instils stress, anxiety or negative emotions among employees. It is one thing to be able to share one's passion, but another thing to actually be able to handle the highly passionate entrepreneur and his vision. We have established that there exists an intense relationship between the entrepreneur and his people, which effects their wellbeing at work. It is clear here that employees have their needs and aspirations when they work, and they expect these to be fulfilled, which adds to their positive wellbeing at work. It is therefore ideal for small entrepreneurial organisations to focus on their employees' wellbeing by means of understanding their needs and aspirations at work and augmenting the capacity for sharing such passion and enthusiasm, not just in terms of the big picture or message, but also the nitty gritty of tasks and functions and their value to the firm. This brings us to the next section, where we will discuss the factors that helped the employees feel as though they owned their work and that the firm gave them entitlement to their decisions at work.

### **5.2.3. Ownership and entitlement**

The participants linked factors such as having freedom at work, autonomy, flexibility, being proactive, having shared responsibility, personal motivations and identities, to a feeling of ownership at work. They also associated some of these elements with being entrepreneurial at work in terms of being creative, generating new ideas, developing new products/services and process-related innovations. The participants expressed both positive and negative emotions while talking about these elements.

In all three case studies, having the freedom to act and make decisions with complete autonomy was a common thread. The participants associated this feeling of freedom with having the ability and competence to conduct their own work. Some employees believed that the entrepreneur understood their competence and therefore gave them the freedom not only to perform their work in their own way, but also to make necessary decisions based on their best judgement. Even though this could to some extent explain the relationship between the entrepreneur and his employees, what needs to be highlighted is that participants associated this freedom and autonomy with owning their work and being entitled to and responsible for their own decisions. Having the freedom to make their decisions was a very integral and significant factor identified by employees across all three organisations. This freedom of being able to choose how they conduct their work was extremely influential in how they felt at work and the way they related this to feeling entitled about their work.

In case study I, some employees felt highly motivated and happy at work because they felt a sense of empowerment, which helped them to thrive in terms of self-development and growth. Freedom for them was feeling responsible and authorised to make decisions regarding their work. The employees perceived that this freedom at work

helped them to act creatively, which enabled them to innovate in terms of new services and new and improved process-related changes at work. Additionally, the employees linked it to being happy at work, being engaged, motivated and having autonomy.

*Lily: “where Luis (entrepreneur)... has kind of given me that empowerment. This freedom that is really useful and I feel like I own my work... he believes in my ability which makes me be more creative about finding unique ways to do new things and to do things differently....”*

Likewise, in case study II, employees felt that the entrepreneur was free-spirited and gave them the freedom to do their work in their own way. These employees perceived that the entrepreneur respected them for who they were and for what they could contribute to the firm. They perceived this freedom as a mark of respect and confidence bestowed upon them by the entrepreneur in fulfilling their work responsibilities. Therefore, employees felt intrinsically motivated in terms of experiencing meaning and sense of purpose at work, engaged with their work with relation to finding new ways to serve the customers, and felt happy at work.

*Randolph: “I would say everyone who works behind the bar brings a bit of personality trait. Every day that someone works there’s a different perspective of how we can sell, how we can provide joy to the customer and how we can do things more differently than others. Danny (entrepreneur) gives us that freedom.”*

Similarly, in case study III, employees felt motivated when they were allowed to make decisions for the firm. This made them feel valued and competent enough to make business-related decisions that were supported by the entrepreneur, and this enabled them to take more responsibilities at work and to feel accountable for their own

decisions. This relates to positive wellbeing in terms of having the sense of fulfilling personal and organisational commitment, being engaged and highly driven/motivated at work.

*Sam: "I think everybody needs to be allowed to make their own decisions within their sphere of competence but yes, I feel that that's quite important because I would, I feel more motivated when I am allowed to make my own decision and I would rather stand and fall on my own decisions. I would rather know I made my own decision, even if it went wrong with what I knew at the time than having it forced on me. Yes, I think that that's quite important, it's quite important to feel responsible for, to be able to make your own decisions and be responsible. I do get to make quite a lot of decisions here. I think occasionally there have been things I have not been happy with and because of commercial reasons we have had to. I think that generally, I am allowed to make my own decisions and do not feel completely overridden."*

In case studies II and III, in addition to having freedom at work, the employees were encouraged to bring their own personal identities and hobbies to work. For instance, in case study II (a public house), this meant that if someone enjoyed writing poetry or making music, the entrepreneur would give them the opportunity to perform and also use their workplace as a platform to grow their personal networks. This was a key factor contributing to positive wellbeing for most employees in this organisation, because they felt that this gave them the entitlement to be themselves at work. These positive emotions were directly linked to performing better at work and also giving it all they had to make the pub a better place for the community to gather and enjoy. These employees also expressed extreme gratitude and loyalty towards the firm, as the firm was helping them grow not just personally but also professionally. They felt they ought

to give their best at work because they got what they were looking for (to be themselves) at work.

*Randolph: "So in a way it's important to me because they give me a chance, they allow me to meet so many people here with whom I collaborate ... I write poetry and it allowed me to meet ...writers, a lot of more social occasions in which I can engage more...."*

Similarly, in case study III, some employees were happy at work because they were allowed to be themselves. At the end, what mattered was whether the work was completed, and desired outcomes were met, not the way an individual conducted this work. For instance, in the case below, Nigel had a tendency to listen to music while working and this habit did not hamper his work in any manner, and his manager was fine with this behaviour as he perceived it as no threat to Nigel's performance at work. This generated positive motivation and mutual respect at work, building stronger bonds and a happy working environment.

*Nigel: "I always have my headphones on...my manager is ok with it because he knows I get my work done on time. It's like I am allowed to bring my hobbies to work. I love listening to music that keeps me happy."*

Alongside positive attributes, there were certain negative facets that emerged in all three case study organisations, such as the issue of accountability within the organisation. All three entrepreneurial organisations involved in this study had a common culture of 'free rein'. Here, as per the participants' perception, having free rein meant having the freedom to do what they wanted to do with very little or no control at all from the entrepreneur. Nonetheless, this culture of free rein had different degrees

and varied interpretations in each organisation, as did the issue of accountability, which according to the participants affected their wellbeing.

In case study I, the issue of accountability was particularly related to some individuals who did not perform their work or routines effectively according to their colleagues. Even though to some extent they had some organisational structure, there were no clear job roles assigned to employees and there were implicit routines that some employees did not bother to follow or adhere to. This reflects back on the family-like culture in this organisation, where some were negatively affected by the over-familiar attitudes at work, which in the case below also reflected the lack of taking up responsibilities and ownership of their work. This issue affected some employees, who were not completely in favour of having a free rein culture where lack of accountability was a resultant factor. Therefore, some felt extremely unhappy and stressed at work because they were carrying the load of some others who were not taking responsibility for their actions at work. Low levels of engagement at work and less sense of organisational commitment were also the consequential outcomes according to some participants.

*Inky: "We are all one big family but that has its negatives. That's basically where no one takes the responsibility for things, they just expect others to do it."*

In case study II, the issue of not taking up responsibility was interlinked with the problems relating to having a proper system or procedures in place. According to some participants, freedom was misunderstood by a few other firm employees, as they saw this as an opportunity to not perform the work duties essential to their role. In the example below, Elena is upset with some other employees at work who do not perform their basic duties to fill up the empty fridge with beers. According to her, the



entrepreneur does not check up on them or on how they perform their work, and he (entrepreneur) has given them the complete freedom to run their shift as they so desire. However, this behaviour and the employees failing to perform their duties began to affect Elena and her work. She was unhappy, frustrated and somewhat tired of this attitude at work. This also reflects on the relationship at work, where very little obligation is there to provide others at work with a pleasant and positive working environment.

*Elena: "it needs to be managed properly. I do not know, the guys, nobody bottles up so we have all of this really expensive beer and nobody puts it in the fridge they will just leave it up there, no one really takes the onus to do it and I'm embarrassed if someone asks for a beer, if I have to say, I am sorry I have not got any that's cold."*

In case study III, the employees felt that the lack of taking responsibility was deeply embedded in their workplace culture, where people blamed others for any wrongdoing or downfalls. Being a small entrepreneurial firm, many of the employees multi-tasked at work and this made it difficult to hold one person accountable for a job and easy for the employees to blame each other for their faults. These issues led to negative emotions such as anger, irritation and frustration, which sometimes resulted in stress and depression.

*Mindy: " there is ownership issues, people here are still kind of into a blaming culture, putting things on others' shoulders. It's improved since I joined but there's still a lack of people not taking ownership. If someone's done something just forget it, find a solution, and fix it. Ok so that sort of culture is still lacking, and I always try to make sure that my team members and I try taking ownership, like let it be and let's find a solution"*

In a nutshell, having freedom at work, bringing personal identities and habits to work and the issue of accountability were factors linked to the feeling of having ownership and entitlement at work. This feeling of ownership was interlinked with feelings of happiness, motivation, work engagement, self-development and a sense of organisational commitment. All these factors are conceptualised as wellbeing constructs in the literature; as positive, psychological and subjective wellbeing of individuals at work (see Rook, 2013; Robertson and Cooper, 2011; Ryff and Keyes, 1985).

Up until now, we have read about the people factor within small entrepreneurial organisations, the relational dynamics between people at work, with the entrepreneur and customers and several factors that led to the feeling of having ownership and entitlement of one's work. It is seen that strong ties in relational terms have a positive impact on the impression employees have on ownership and of being accountable at work. What we understand by this is that people are the key to a small firm's growth and success because that depends on the wellbeing and happiness of their people. The employees within small organisations give immense importance to various facets of being entrepreneurial such as freedom at work, being opportunistic, building networks for business growth and success by creating social and cultural capital, and they associate these elements of their work with their psychological wellbeing-related perceptions such as positive emotions, gaining environmental mastery, personal growth, autonomy and sense of purpose, as conceptualised in the wellbeing literature by Ryff and Keyes (1985). Another important theme originating from this study concerned the various facets of creativity and the creative process with small entrepreneurial organisations, which influences and affects employee wellbeing at work.

### **5.3. The Creative Process**

The creative process within a small entrepreneurial organisation was perceived by employees as one of the factors that affected workplace wellbeing. The employees associated factors such as space, time, nature and intensity of work, empowerment, shared values, creating new products/services/processes and having unrealistic deadlines with the dimensions of the creative process/act within a small entrepreneurial firm. There were both objective paradigms and emotional influences that contributed to these dimensions of creativity or the creative process within small entrepreneurial organisations.

#### **5.3.1. Objective Paradigms**

Two themes emerged across all three case studies, which were identified as factors affecting the individual's wellbeing at work. The participants perceived the nature and intensity of their work and creating new and unique products/services/processes within the firm as important dimensions of creativity, which in turn affected their sense of achievement, happiness, work engagement, sense of meaning and purpose at work, aspiring to fulfil their personal and organisational goals with personal growth and environmental mastery. Nature of work and intensity were deeply related to positive feelings (motivation, learning, excitement, happiness), especially in case study I.

*Lily: "So at the moment I am quite excited because we have a couple of really big projects which make me excited and which I have been working on which I can dig my teeth into which is what I love."*

Then again, however, some also felt that if they had a structured timetable for doing both routine and creative, new jobs, they would be more effective. They wished to strike a balance between creative activities such as brainstorming and working on

identifying new service opportunities and doing day-to-day activities and tasks. This balance was essential for employees' wellbeing at work in the way it affected how they felt about their work and how much stability they thought they had at their job. This balance seemed to be lacking, according to Katrina, and she expressed it in terms of being able to be more prolific at work and that she would prefer having a more organised schedule to perform each task.

*Katrina: "I think having more structured times to work on different things would be good. I would be more productive then but then also to have that time for guidance..."*

In case studies I and III, the participants also felt that they were multi-tasking and doing numerous varied tasks at work, which may or may not be related to their own job role. Entrepreneurial organisations are different from managerial organisations because of their emphasis on innovation often resulting from allowing new people with different ideas and capabilities to complement existing ones. However, some saw this as an opportunity to learn new things and develop, whereas some became anxious and stressed about these roles as they felt they did not possess the right skillset and knowledge to perform these tasks effectively. This could be because people are different, their skillsets are different, everyone has their own learning curve and for some it is easy to multi-task and for others it takes time. This also raises the question of whether these organisations should be more careful when they hire people. They should think about their company needs and cultural aspects and make sure the person fits well with these facets of the organisation to avoid such issues.

*Riya: "In an SME like this, one person is doing multiple things so there are issues and there are gaps which need to be filled and those are not being addressed. So, giving me the role of business development manager is not just*

*redefining the business strategy, implementing the QMS or making sure that it's being properly done or followed through; it's also about taking care of the production, what is going out/in, the sales and marketing, taking care of the R and D side, what they are delivering to the production team so that actually intrigued me to join because I have not been restricted just to define the strategy here."*

Furthermore, creating new and unique products/services/processes was considered vital across all three case study organisations. The respondents perceived that the firm's ability to create new and unique products/services/processes was important in achieving their personal goals, wellbeing and happiness at work. In case study I, many employees took extreme pride in their work and they believed that they were creating customised innovative solutions through diverse and intense training modules for their clients. Many perceived their firm's values and beliefs for constantly creating value for their clients to be a strong foundation base for being entrepreneurial.

*Sonya: "I think our company is probably the best environment to do that kind of thing (new creative things). Because everyone can pretty much do what they want. We create new training modules and unique wellbeing strategies for all clients day in and day out."*

Positive emotions (such as happiness, motivation, pride, ownership) were associated with this theme by most participants across the three case study organisations. The respondents believed that their firm provided a platform and a suitable setting for them to innovate and produce new things constantly and that every day was a new challenge and an opportunity to learn new things.

*Elena: "We serve different beers all the time, Danny (entrepreneur) spends a long time brewing and experimenting with his beers. That's what is unique about us. We serve new things...the vibe and service here is so different from other pubs in Colchester."*

In case study II, the entrepreneurial firm was not only creating value for their customers by serving fifty different freshly brewed unique Belgian beers, but also creating a new venture by opening a new café beside the pub, seizing on an opportunity in the market. This new venture created a buzz in Colchester because it was promoting new talented chefs in the Colchester area, who were showcasing their culinary skills at the café. This was new for Colchester because every week there was a new chef cooking and pleasing the customers at the café and the pub next door. Some employees felt extremely happy and proud of this new venture as it brought new customers into the pub. Moreover, the entrepreneur's sense of achievement, sense of meaning and purpose in his life, personal growth and aspirations were all heightened due to this new venture.

*Danny: "We bought the café next door, we plan to serve some food there, so we are getting that sorted now. We want to keep on doing new things."*

Some employees in case study III, especially technically trained employees (considering it is a hi-tech firm) were extremely happy and thrilled to be able to create new designs and develop products. This pushed their own limits as they had to constantly keep updating themselves with the latest technology and they saw this as an opportunity to learn and train themselves in many areas. These employees also mentioned that this opportunity was helping them fulfil their personal needs and goals at work, which made them feel valued, competent, experienced, knowledgeable and adaptable at work. Thriving in sense of self-development, motivated in terms of

experiencing meaning and purpose at work, aspiration of fulfilling personal and organisational goals, job satisfaction and organisational commitment of generating new and unique products were the positive emotions and feelings derived from this.

*Justin: "we design new things to solve the issues...we have the capability of creating products in R and D... I was so lucky to get a job in the area, that I started to really like this job and I really do not want to go into any other field after doing so much work in this field."*

In case studies I and II, empowerment had different effects on workplace wellbeing as experienced by different people. Most of the employees in case study I saw it as a positive aspect, which induced positive feelings such as feeling authorised and entitled to carry out their work in their own way. This also related to the freedom the employees experienced at work and autonomy they felt from within to achieve their goals.

*Sonya: "I thought up to now that I do need Luis' (entrepreneur) approval because I am still sometimes involved in the sales and consulting companies so there every time I feel like I need to ask him but now just a couple of weeks/months ago, we really got to a point where he is like every time you come to me and ask me permission to do something I always say yes there has never been a situation where I disagreed with your decision so just do it. So, he has kind of given me that empowerment. So that was really useful and encouraging. That's something I am trying to pass on to others and tell people what's stopping you just do it. This is because I know that brings out the best in you. That gives you confidence to try new things and new ways and new ideas..."*

However, when the entrepreneur gave some employees the power to make decisions, they became stressed and anxious, as they believed that they did not possess the

skills, or the experience needed to take up this responsibility. Thus, there seems to be some mismatch between the expectations of the entrepreneur and the capabilities or skills of the employees. Therefore, the positive act of trying to empower the employees was not seen as empowering, but rather it was merely delegation of work. However, these employees also felt that they would feel empowered in a situation where they were given adequate training, and that this would change the way they looked at situations such as these. Most employees in case study I were excited and motivated when they had big projects/tasks to complete. This made them feel challenged when learning new things.

In case study II, most employees directly associated having the power to make decisions with empowerment. They perceived that the entrepreneur allowed them to take full control and feel responsible for their work. This was linked to positive wellbeing attributes such as pride, happiness, personal growth and feeling valued.

*Sasha: "Danny (entrepreneur) believes in me and he pushes me to reach my best, that's not something I have experienced any place else...it's just here...he makes you feel that you have that power and authority where you can make decisions and feel totally in control."*

Yet, some employees felt that a lack of team support caused them to feel frustrated and this made them extremely unhappy at work, particularly because the team did not support their work and disregarded their ideas or implemented plans. In the example below, the employee Elena felt that the entrepreneur had given her authorisation based on her experience and knowledge to carry out changes and to produce new and unique process-related changes, but the team did not support her decisions because they did not implement them at work; this reflects back to the relationships at



work in this firm, which were merely formal, and there was very little obligation to interact with others at work.

*Elena: "I get really frustrated when people do not care about the work I have put in to make these changes at work. I was given this chance by Danny (entrepreneur) and he agrees with me about my ideas, but I do not find enough support to make it happen. This is just a waste of my time and I feel like there is no team spirit among us. It's like I have the authority, but I do not have it..."*

Likewise, in case study I, having a shared value and vision was a factor important to their wellbeing at work. Sharing a common vision and values gave the participants a sense of belonging to the firm and they identified themselves as 'one unit' because they shared similar passions and vision. This interlinks with the 'one big family' feeling as one of their shared values or cultural aspects was a 'family-like' environment at work, where every individual could speak their mind and they all shared their views and opinions as one big family.

*Dave: "...the passion and mission here is the duty of care and that is why and how we identify the most with the organisation. We want to do good for society...having a common goal we feel like one family..."*

In case study II, being able to bring personal identities to work was not just restricted to being oneself at work and showing one's personality at the bar counter to sell and attract more customers. It was also about the firm giving these talented employees a platform to showcase their talent and enhance themselves through their chosen form of art or music. The firm's shared vision was related to building social and cultural capital for the firm by making a communal space where society could gather and interact, creating value and networks for the firm. The whole idea of giving an

opportunity to talented individuals to perform and showcase their gift in music, poetry, art or singing was shared across the firm by all individuals. This was also because some employees were a part of this talent and they could bring their personal identity to work, which generated positive wellbeing outcomes for them, such as having a sense of meaning and purpose at work, being able to develop and grow both personally and professionally, being extremely engaged at work with their customers, and being able to fulfil personal and organisational goals. They all also shared the passion of beers, music, gigs and conversations, which positively affected the individual's wellbeing at work as well as the firm's network and business.

*Tate: "Danny (entrepreneur) said he wanted this to be a place where misfits can be happy, and I think some of us here would not fit into a mainstream bureaucratic office...he lets (another employee) DJ and (another employee) recite his poetry...he wants them to be happy and they get this amazing place to do this..."*

In case study I, employees perceived space (physical and mental) as one of the factors that influenced creativity at work. The recent shift to their new and extended office space generated a sense of happiness and excitement among the employees; feelings that they shared with the entrepreneur. Previous space restrictions had stopped them from having their brainstorming sessions or meetings or even simple interactions with the team.

*Sonya: "Monday was the first day in the new office and on Sunday I was really looking forward to coming to work because we have a bigger space now, I had not had that feeling for a long time to be honest and I was really excited about coming to work because we have the new office. In the old office there was no space for anything because we had to share with the other organisation. That's*

*why the new office, more space and no restrictions made me really excited and happy to come to work.”*

Creativity and head space (mental) was affordable in this new so-called ‘breathing space’. Here the employees associated the lack of physical space with the lack of mental space within their minds, because of which their ability to think creatively was hampered. Therefore, when they shifted to a more spacious new office, they felt liberated and happy both mentally and physically. This influenced how employees felt at work, and their happiness, engagement and productivity at work. The literature already suggests the link between office spaces and physical environment and employees’ happiness and wellbeing (see Schreven, 2009; Marquardt et al., 2002; Well, 2000).

### **5.3.2. Perceptions and Emotions**

Moving from objective dimensions of the creative process within small entrepreneurial organisations to perceptions and emotional aspects of the dimensions of creativity; factors such as appreciation/recognition at work, freedom to fail, personal goals or passion and emotional demands at work were identified by the participants.

Being allowed to make mistakes at work or being able to share the failures at work were considered important by participants in all three case study organisations. In case study I, some participants mentioned that the feeling of knowing they were allowed to make mistakes at work without being penalised had a positive influence on their wellbeing at work. They felt motivated to come up with new ideas at work, and they also had a sense of autonomy and felt valued because they were allowed to make mistakes without fearing reprisals. Some felt that they were only able to make certain

types of mistake that did not have major implications or consequences. Such employees were cautious about their actions at work and did not take extreme risks at work because of the perceived consequences of failure.

*Katrina: "I am allowed to make mistakes but there are certain mistakes I cannot afford to make because that will affect my job. My manager once intervened and punished me for making a mistake. But then he left soon so I did not bother anymore because I became more careful and conscious about my work. I stopped taking risks and did only what was right as per the book."*

In all three cases, the entrepreneurs wanted their teams to try new things and wanted them to innovate and accept failure. Employees saw this in two ways, first in a positive manner – where they had the liberty to follow their ideas and implement them using their best judgements. The second way in which the employees interpreted this was that there were restrictions as to what types of mistake or failure were acceptable and who was permitted to make such mistakes. This stopped them from taking risks at work and trying new ways/methods at work.

In case study II, the entrepreneur being a free-spirited individual by nature, allowed his employees to make mistakes, but some employees because of their personal moral and ethical compass did not wish to keep repeating the same types of mistake, because they did not want to abuse the entrepreneur's faith in them. However, for these employees it was necessary to know that making mistakes was allowed at work so that they could create new ways and innovative processes at work without being afraid of failure. Being able to make mistakes was one factor that affected the employees' wellbeing at work in a way that gave them the sense of being valued at work, personal growth, motivation to be creative and engaged at work.

*Randolph: "I think Danny (entrepreneur) gives a lot of chances, he is very patient, so he allows you to make mistakes but it's not good to repeat them personally I feel that way. But yeah, he is chill with things."*

In case study III, the lack of freedom to fail was a factor that affected some employees. They saw this lack of freedom to fail as a threat to their innovative and creative quotient. The culture within the company of blaming each other for their mistakes was one of the reasons that some employees felt they could not make mistakes, because it might make them un-resourceful and they were afraid that the entrepreneur would eventually have to ask them to leave their job. Therefore, some employees linked the lack of freedom to fail at work with job insecurity and job loss. This created uncertainty in the minds of such employees, demotivating and disengaging them at work. Negative emotions of stress, anxiety and frustration were also observed while the employees were discussing this issue.

*Riya: "I think because the culture I talked about the blaming culture there is no freedom to fail here, people are afraid about committing mistakes. They feel that something bad will happen. It's not just one thing if someone starts getting blamed all the time, Larry (entrepreneur) will think he is not a useful resource and in due time he will start planning to take someone else as a new resource. So, in that case I will start fearing to make even a small mistake, so I will be demotivated"*

Most employees in case study I felt that their creative streak was at its highest because they all shared a similar emotional quotient compared to others at work and a passion for their social mission. They said their job was emotionally demanding because they dealt with people affected by mental health problems, but they had emotional support

at work to handle this pressure and act creatively to manage these problems. Organisational wellbeing activities helped the employees to handle these types of pressure at work, such as the wellbeing and meditation room, going for a walk during breaks, listening to music at work to calm themselves or bringing pets to work.

*Dave: "...the passion and mission here is the duty of care and that is why and how we identify the most with the organisation...We want to do good for society...having a common goal we feel like one family...we discuss our work issues and help each other to solve them...it helps us to be sensible and distant from the client's issues..."*

However, some employees felt that the emotional demands were clouding their judgements and driving them down a negative spiral of mental health issues. There was a clear imbalance between professional and personal wellbeing at work due in part to the requirement of withholding personal emotions as professionals. In the example below, this employee was clearly not able to strike that balance and could not distance herself from becoming too involved with work, which made her stressed and anxious at work. We can also relate to Sonya here because she was the one who was negatively affected by the family-like culture and therefore, we could say that she did not wish to discuss her feelings openly with others at work.

*Sonya: "I feel that this is the kind of divide that we sometimes have as a company that we do not always practise what we preach... we get to the point...where we notice that we have become too much of a caveman Joe (stressed out) and then we need to talk with the team and get back into the more professional side of things but it's always this kind of balance that we are struggling to keep".*

Another common perception in case studies I and II was that they perceived their entrepreneur(s) to be “two-faced”, which meant they tended to say one thing but acted in another way. While the entrepreneur encouraged employees to voice their opinions or views, this did not lead to any changes in the entrepreneur’s behaviour and actions. This negatively affected their ability to be creative at work and to create value for their clients, as most of their unique ideas were rejected either due to lack of resources or because the entrepreneur had a better idea (not as per the employee but as per the entrepreneur).

*Lily: “when you do have a great idea we do have lots of great ideas then we have to discuss it with Luis (entrepreneur)... he often shoots me down... it is like some split personality....”*

This created an environment where not only was the relationship between the entrepreneur and the employees affected, but also the personal wellbeing of the employees. Some employees felt that they had low autonomy, relatively low engagement levels and a sense of frustration because their ideas were not accepted. On the other hand, in case study II, some employees had even started building up their own ideas for their own venture in the near future instead of discussing and using them for their existing firm.

*Elena: “I would really like to have a place on my own someday because I do not think this place has a nice balance.”*

The working environment where creative ideas were encouraged and appreciated suited some people’s personality in both organisations. However, others felt that some colleagues did not really understand their job role and appreciate what they were doing, thus losing out on recognition or appreciation that they believed they should

earn. This also relates to the kind of relationship between the entrepreneur and some employees in case studies I and II.

The creative process or the various dimensions of creativity within small entrepreneurial organisations have been explored in this section. We could possibly conclude by saying that people have different objectified attributes, which contribute to them being creative at work, and some emotional aspects that they perceive to be important act as creative agents at work. Here we could also note that the people factor with small entrepreneurial organisations has a clear connection to the creative process within such firms. We can see how positive relational facets act as an enabler for creativity at work. The objective aspect, for instance the office space and how that affects the wellbeing of employees, has already been proven by researchers in psychology and management (see Schreven, 2009; Marquardt et al., 2002; Well, 2000) and that seems to be important in one of these scenarios because small organisations or start-ups sometimes do not have a fixed/allotted space for themselves; so maybe that is something such organisations should look into while recruiting people (who can adapt) or while deciding on a workplace. Here, another important aspect that should be highlighted is the personal passion and goals of an individual, be it the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them, getting recognised for their work or living up to the emotional demands at work. These factors contribute to various positive wellbeing-related aspects such as personal growth, autonomy, happiness, environmental mastery, self acceptance and purpose in life. When these factors are not as per the employee's perception or needs, they act negatively on the wellbeing of that individual. This again echoes the fact that every individual has certain needs and aspirations that he/she strives to achieve. Accomplishing these goals is often associated with achieving positive wellbeing and small entrepreneurial organisations with entrepreneurial spirit act as an important catalyst in this scenario.



Not only is this helpful and positive for the employee, but also for the firm, as they in turn gain higher levels of employee satisfaction and productivity at work.

#### **5.4. The Organisational Structure, policies and procedures**

In all the three case study organisations, organisational structure, policies and procedure was one of the themes that was identified by the participants while discussing personal wellbeing at work. The presence or deficit of procedures, policies or structure within a small firm had an influence on the wellbeing of employees working in such organisations. Entrepreneurial organisations need a culture and structure that enable innovation in order to achieve entrepreneurial outcomes (Mitra, 2013). It was observed that certain formal structures within these small entrepreneurial organisations enabled the employees to act in an entrepreneurial way, and which also had an impact on their wellbeing at work. These formal structures at work were identified by the employees during their interviews as factors important to positive wellbeing at work. Formal structures in this context are perceived as the explicit routines, policies and procedures at work.

##### **5.4.1. Formal Structures at work**

Appropriate structures, culture, mechanisms and routines are vital to entrepreneurial organisations because these provide support to the innovation on which the firm focuses (Mitra, 2013). The participants perceived a culture of change and continuous developments as an integral part of the firm, which shaped the firm's environment and structure, and aided the process of innovation within the firm. This culture was attributed to both positive and negative aspects of wellbeing.

In case study I, some participants linked this culture of change and continuous improvements to negative emotions such as stress, anxiety and lack of confidence, as they could not cope well with and adapt to the constantly changing situations. The reason this could have happened was because some individuals did not possess the skills needed to adapt, which made them unsuitable for such working environments where things are continuously evolving. In the example below, Alex found it difficult to adjust in the continuously evolving culture of the firm because of her previous work experience, which did not expose her to this kind of environment where there were no official policies, but a structure that was evolving rapidly and was perceived as an explicit tool for the process of innovation.

*Alex: "I have worked in organisations where things were pretty strict and there were rules which everyone had to follow...I have worked for more than 30 years and I got used to that kind of working style but here it is totally different. Every day is a new challenge and things keep regularly evolving and I just need time to adjust...but it really stresses me out because sometimes things are changing drastically.... I also see some people who joined after me are also struggling with this..."*

Some individuals in this case were resistant towards change because it took them a while to understand their job and to do the tasks in a particular manner, and then when it suddenly changed again they would become stressed. However, some employees were highly driven by this continuous change since they could easily adapt and mould themselves to adjust to these changing circumstances. These employees perceived themselves as flexible individuals who were positively motivated and engaged at work because of the diverse and versatile range of activities they were exposed to there. For them change was good, and it meant they could learn more skills and thrive at work in terms of self-development and personal growth. Some of these employees

also believed that innovation was only possible when it was accepted that change is inevitable and important not for only continuous improvements, but also for ground-breaking innovations.

*Dave: "I love challenges at work. So, if something changes or improves I happily accept and moreover it I adapt very quickly so it does not matter...I think it's important for us...you know...or how will we make new things?"*

In case study II, some employees felt that it was not possible to force everyone to do what was required at work or to follow the changing rules/processes at work – this created a stressful environment for those who had to bear the consequences of some employees not following procedure or 'not falling into the line'. Some employees felt that there was a clear need for some ground rules with which day-to-day work could function smoothly and would provide some sort of consistency to the work. Even though there were some rules laid down at work, these employees were not happy at work because others clearly did not follow these rules. Consequently, some employees such as Elena, who were following rules, were stressed due to work overload because they had to carry the baggage of the others who were not following procedures. Negative wellbeing thrived in such situations; leaving some employees frustrated, angry, sad, stressed and demotivated to come to work.

*Elena: "...it would be good if there were protocols for lots of things.... like I said filling the fridge up, even if there were certain steps, we cannot compel everyone to follow them because that is more like a routine job which not everyone likes to do."*

The above example reinforces the kind of work-based relationships where people have very little obligation to provide a pleasant working environment for others, and this shows that they do not care about others at work. On the other hand, as per the

entrepreneur's wife, the entrepreneur himself did not want to make any procedures or rules within the firm because he believed in giving the utmost freedom to all at work. He believed that this would bring the best out of them and that they would act creatively when not restrained. However, she expressed that they were facing day-to-day operational issues because there were inconsistencies at work. At this firm, she was helping her husband (the entrepreneur) to handle the business and she was the one who was taking care of the day-to-day activities and running of the firm. For her, having procedures and policies at work gave her a sense of relief and happiness because she associated this with having ease, clarity and consistency at work. This helps us understand the importance of having procedures and policies at work for the wellbeing of individuals at work.

*Donna: "Danny (entrepreneur) does not want to change anything here. He does not understand that we need to have some policies and we need to follow some rules here...He thinks giving everyone freedom is the best way to do things...But we are facing issues now and he just does not care I feel... he thinks I am trying to dominate and take charge..."*

In case study III, some policies and procedures were starting to evolve and take shape within the firm. Some employees embraced these policies and procedures whereas some participants did not accept this change. Like the older employees, the people who had been in the company for a longer time were resistant to new ideas or changes in procedures/policies because they felt they were irrelevant. This made it difficult and frustrating for managers to keep the team members in line with the changing policies or procedures. This resistance was affecting the wellbeing of the employees who were trying to implement this change. This resistance caused them to feel demotivated about trying to bring new innovative changes, especially in the process-related aspects of the firm. They also started to feel that they did not have the autonomy at work to implement ideas that would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations

within the firm. They also felt that the entrepreneur did not want to lose his more experienced team members (who according to them were resisting changes and improvements at work), so they felt a lack of support in terms of helping them to convince these employees and bring them to adopt the new system and policies.

*Riya: "They just do not want to change. They feel like it's irrelevant. If they do not do it, no one is going to fire them, no one is going to say anything because they know they are here for the last 3 years and have enough experience and knowledge. The company won't fire them and get someone else because there will be another 12-month cycle to learn to get to that level. So, small companies are reluctant, they do not really want the person who has got so much experience to leave unless it is a very exceptional case"*

Entrepreneurial organisations are different from managerial organisations because of their emphasis on innovation, often resulting from allowing people with different ideas and capabilities to complement existing ones (Mitra, 2013; Muzyka et al., 1995). Thus, entrepreneurial organisations, especially small entrepreneurial firms (where resources are sparse), need people who are willing to contribute to the process of innovation, who are not flexible enough to mould themselves, unlearn and learn new skills and enhance their capabilities. If not, this might lead to high attrition levels and extra workload for staff who stay on. This also brings us to the next important aspect that surfaced from the findings of cases I and II, that is, the person-company fit. In both these organisations, most employees felt strongly that their wellbeing was negatively affected when the firm hired people who did not fit their organisational culture and who possessed neither the skills to adapt to change nor the capabilities to innovate.

For instance, in case study I as per the employee, he was recruited because his persona fit the organisational attitude of being free and laid back, which was his interpretation of the firm's culture and what they were looking for. However, within six months, this employee had left the organisation. According to a few employees, he was not able to adapt to the ways in which the firm functioned. This meant that there was a clear contradiction to how the employee perceived the company culture to be, or how and what the organisation portrayed it to be. Organisations need to be extremely clear and thoughtful before they hire people because a wrong fit might adversely affect wellbeing experiences at work.

*Alex: "...my personality is very laid back and approachable and that's exactly what they wanted in their team, but I was not so experienced for the job they hired me to do." (Employee left the company within six months of joining)*

It was, therefore, necessary for them to start looking for candidates who understood the firm's culture, innovative drive and the entrepreneurial spirit and passion, and who had the required skills and capabilities to function in such a thriving environment. Not only the employees, but the entrepreneurs in both these organisations believed it was necessary for them to hire people who were creative, believed in what they did and were open to the changing circumstances at work. Both organisations had experienced adverse incidents (major fights at work, mistrust, theft, all leading to high attrition) at work because they hired the wrong kind of person. Now, what happens here is that not only is the wellbeing of the employee who leaves the firm affected to some extent, but it adversely affects the wellbeing of the other employees at work.

For instance, in the example below (in case study II), this employee was deeply affected by the other employee, who was asked to leave the firm because of his

misbehaviour and dominating attitude at work. This employee who was acting out was hired based on his experience and also because the entrepreneur perceived him to be a good fit for their small team. The entrepreneur viewed this employee as creative, responsible and passionate about the business, wanting to make improvements. However, this person's behaviour and actions at work affected Donna's wellbeing not just mentally, but also physically. She felt extremely anxious, felt unsafe and not in control in her firm, and this affected her adversely. We can see that this employee abused the entrepreneur's trust in him, and the authority and freedom he had been given at work.

*Donna: "He was really arrogant and rude not just to the customers, but also to me. I even felt like he was stealing from us and that's when I told Danny (entrepreneur) we need to install cameras just for the safety of our employees and customers. This guy once threatened me in front of customers and he was coming at me...I was scared, and I felt helpless...we had to ask him to leave...he was not happy...very angry...."*

Work-life balance was another important aspect that was perceived to have an influence on wellbeing. Most participants across all three case study organisations mentioned that this feature played a vital role in being stress-free, happy and balanced both at work and at home. In case study I, employees had arrangements such as a wellbeing and meditation room and showers at work so that people could exercise/cycle to work, and so on. This contributed to positive wellbeing. However, some employees associated work-life balance with having flexibility to choose the hours they worked or having the liberty to take breaks whenever they wanted. This

created a positive environment and it instilled positive feelings such as happiness, calmness and motivation to do the best at work.

*Alex: "... that might be my age and I am well into my 40s and through my working career I feel I have earned the right to have a good work-life balance. So that's really really important to me and even more so because of the commute and the other things... I think I do have work-life balance here, but it's about you know kind of...I am still probably adapting and embedding in to a different kind of working that I am used to...So I have to got to make it work for me as well as making sure that Luis (entrepreneur) is happy with the role and the work I am doing. So, it's obviously got to work both ways. "*

In case study II, some employees expressed their views on work-life balance and how it is vital to have a good work-life balance to achieve both on the personal front as well as professionally. However, a few were of the view that coming to work was balancing their personal life, which involved studying or doing another full-time job. Work-life balance was associated with emotional attributes of keeping oneself stable and sound to perform and be functional. Having this balance was seen as an important factor in achieving positive wellbeing at work.

*Harvey: "For me coming here is what balances my hectic study schedule. I think most of us here are doing something other than working here so coming here pouring drinks listening to music and enjoying with your customers is how we keep our sanity."*

Some employees in case study III mentioned that the work-life balance was a crucial factor in their wellbeing and they were happy that they could have a work-life balance while working for this firm. The employees believed that they had been given freedom



and flexibility at work, which enabled them to balance their work commitments and their personal lives. This balance helped them not only to be productive at work, but also to contribute proactively at work. A sense of satisfaction, fulfilment of potential and sense of being able to grow personally and professionally were induced due to this work-life balance. The firm strongly supported their employees to take a balanced approach between personal life and work life.

*Ian: "Honestly, I have got a really good work-life balance. We have a lot of give and take where they let me come and go as I please, but they know I still do the work and the hours by the end of the month. So, if I fancy going and play golf on a Monday morning I do not have to call in and pretend I'm sick. I can call in and say I am going to play golf in the morning, not many companies do that. But they know for a fact that I'd stay until 8-9 in the evening the next day or the day after that to do the work. There's no line, there's no pulling sick days if I fancy an emergency holiday, it's fine, so yeah, it's open, not many companies do that. Last time I worked for a company you got toilet breaks, you got timed."*

In case study III, health and safety policy at work was an important factor that came up quite a lot during the interview. The reason for this is that there was a major issue of health and safety which was an ongoing situation in the firm at the time this study was being conducted. Many employees from the factory where there was an oil spill were complaining and raising concerns about their physical and mental wellbeing due to this unfortunate incident of a toxic oil spill on the factory floor. It was not the incident that was the issue but the way the management dealt with the issue that was the problem. The health and safety manager did not quite know what needed to be done in this particular situation, which led to poor decision making and inadequate actions in terms of solving the problem. The employees raised their concern several times, but the entrepreneur and the said manager only gave them false promises and kept

neglecting the issue. This negatively affected the wellbeing of most employees, both physically and mentally. One of the employees was even rushed to hospital because he had a reaction to this toxic oil spill. This created stress and anxiety due to uncertainty and a sense of disengagement from work, and feeling frustrated that the entrepreneur was not actively resolving the issue. This is a serious issue where the employee feels as though the company is not concerned about their safety and is asking them to work even in adverse conditions such as this. This also highlights the work relationships and the level of trust between the entrepreneur and the employees.

*Martin: "There are a few health and safety issues but they have been brought up but sadly you asked me this question when we're having major oil spill recently and we have to keep... the oil spill still has not been sorted and they have cleaned it up and stuff like that but the chemical is in the concrete and the fumes are coming through it and because of that, it's been going on for about 3 weeks now, because of that, we have had to keep the warehouse shutter door open every day to let fresh air in to filter out the chemicals because it's not safe for us to be in there if the fumes are there... There was a process that was followed through but sadly, the end part of that process has not been followed up, I think but at the end of the day I am leaving it to H&S to sort it out and if they ask me to do things that have me go anywhere near that I am turning around and saying no because that's not safe. I am keeping my best interest in saying no. As I said, if you would asked me any other month, any other month I would have said no, it's absolutely fine but at the moment the environment of the warehouse is very much cold. I have to wear a coat and gloves to make sure I am not freezing."*

#### 5.4.2. Informal Structures at work

Entrepreneurial organisations need to create a balance between formal and informal structures, policies and procedures at work. The entrepreneurial culture helps to shape and define appropriate structures, routines and mechanisms within organisations. Entrepreneurial organisations are also termed as learning organisations because of their key ability of constantly evolving through learning new creative ways of enabling the process of innovation (Mitra, 2013, 2000; Gibb, 1997).

The importance of informal learning and development was seen across all three organisations and the participants associated this aspect of their firm with the culture of learning new skills and continuously improving and upgrading their knowledge. Learning “new things” and developing their skills and competencies gave them the ability to adapt to change quickly while increasing their self-confidence.

Having big projects helped them learn new skills and enhance their capabilities according to some employees in case study I. The entrepreneurs in all three organisations were very open to the idea of continuous learning, training and developing their employees in terms of the new products, processes and services. Positive wellbeing attributes such as happiness, motivation and engagement were linked to training and development by most employees across all three organisations.

*Sonya: “I have started learning to code and all that kind of stuff which is truthfully very basic, but I am learning new stuff which I love. I am better at what I do, and I also teach others how to do it.”*

In case study II, the new employees were learning from their senior members who had been a part of the firm for longer and had more experience than they had. These new employees expressed that this on-the-job informal learning process was helping them to create new insights and ideas using the information from their seniors and amalgamating it with their own creative thinking. This induced a sense of personal growth, environmental mastery and motivation at work.

*Sasha: "I am new to this, so I am happy to learn...Elena (another employee) teaches me stuff and I then add my take to it and that's how I get through my work. It's an amazing feeling for me because I am learning new things and I am getting really really good at this job it's like a kick start for my career...I think I will be doing this for a long time. I love it."*

Similarly, in case study III the entrepreneur was helping his employees to get training and attain qualifications that could further their skills and knowledge. They did not have a written policy, but it was more like an informal personal agenda for the entrepreneur to be able to support the learning process of at least one of his employees at a given point in time. The employees therefore felt extremely happy and motivated to keep learning and giving back to the organisation. They were thriving in terms of self development both personally and professionally; this also gave them a sense of accomplishment in terms of both their personal and organisational goals.

*Joey: "The reason I am choosing to stay here is because they give a very large option for qualifications. I am currently waiting for my results in an NVQ in warehousing. Once I get that it shows that I am fully qualified to work in any warehouse in the country, so it was a good opportunity that they (the organisation) gave me and once I get my results I plan on doing my next level which is warehouse supervisor. The company allowed me to boost my own*

*knowledge of how a warehouse should work and be and that's what makes me happy."*

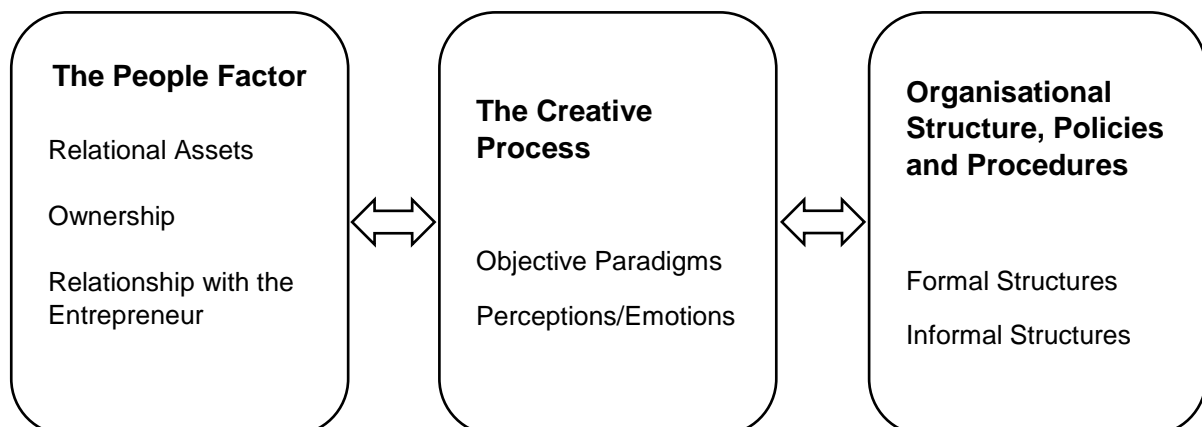
Furthermore, having personal resilience at work was seen as a vital factor, especially in case study I. Most participants argued that they were more able to cope with stress in this fast-changing, high-paced, innovative environment through personal resilience and family support. A few participants believed that their unbalanced negative relationships in their personal lives did affect their wellbeing both at work and at home, but there were many among them who believed that they had good support at work, which helped them cope with such situations.

*Dave: "what we actually teach here is personal resilience. It's your responsibility...you feel like you are getting caught up in anything stressful, well that's your choice, to get caught up in the drama and get worried about it..."*

In the above cases, all three small entrepreneurial organisations encouraged freedom to innovate and grow not only at firm level, but also at individual level. This freedom was questioned by employees when policies were put in place and protocols had to be followed. Therefore, here the most important factor that influences both the individual's wellbeing at work and the firm's outcomes is the person-company fit. If these small organisations pay more attention to understanding what kind of people they need in order to achieve the desired outcomes and to sustain their entrepreneurial spirit, they will be able to recruit the right person for the right job. These organisations also need to understand the needs and personal aspirations of the individual they hire so that both the firm and the individual can gain the most out of this association. This would create positive wellbeing for the individual and that might translate to higher levels of productivity and happiness at work.

Small entrepreneurial organisations are best known for the quest to improve continuously and make new products and services, but not all employees in the above cases had the ability or skills to adapt quickly to this fast-paced environment, and therefore, person-company fit and assessing whether the individual will thrive in such an environment is necessary not only for their personal wellbeing, but also to keep the firm's attrition levels down. Training individuals and helping them continuously learn new things has also proven to be effective for workplace wellbeing. At this juncture, we also need to understand that not every task within a small entrepreneurial firm is going to be exciting, creative or challenging, but employees need to find that balance between creative tasks and routine jobs. By understanding this balance, the individual as well as the firm would benefit manifold. In small entrepreneurial organisations, organisational policies and procedures might play an important role in streamlining their existing business and shaping their future without compromising on the entrepreneurial spirit. The above three themes (the people factor, the creative process and organisational structure, policies and procedures) are interlinked with each other in a manner where they render support in understanding and gaining an in-depth picture of the various components of small entrepreneurial firms (see Figure 9 below) and the wellbeing experiences in such firms.

Figure 9: A summary of the components of Small Entrepreneurial Organisations



## 5.5 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter presents my detailed interpretation of the important themes/codes that were generated while analysing the raw data. In a nutshell, we have seen how people, the creative process and the organisational structure, policies and procedures together form the basis of understanding small entrepreneurial organisations and how the factors within these broad themes impact on the wellbeing of individuals working in these organisations. We understand that employees working in small entrepreneurial firms have aspirations and passion of their own, which helps them to act in an entrepreneurial way (being creative, improving continuously, learning new concepts, creating new products, processes or services) so as to grow and flourish within the workplace. Components of entrepreneurial organisations thus act as enablers for employees to achieve not only their personal goals but also organisational goals. Furthermore, when these goals are positively fulfilled, we can see that the employees experience positive wellbeing and a sense of purpose – personal growth, environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relationships and self-acceptance. They often experience positive emotions such as happiness, engagement and motivation as well. However, at certain times, these aspirations are not fulfilled due to several reasons as seen in the above sections, where negative emotions arise, causing negative wellbeing, stress, anxiety, depression or unhappiness at work. In the next chapter, I will be reflecting on these individuals' aspirations and wellbeing experiences in the context of small entrepreneurial firms using Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach.

## **Chapter Six: Discussion**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter begins by summarising the noteworthy findings of this study with the immediate objective of reflecting on the existing literature and model or theories, which would possibly help us interpret these findings critically.

The extant literature on workplace wellbeing and small entrepreneurial firms covers workplace wellbeing in different contexts (such as large organisations) and from a different viewpoint (such as the entrepreneur's wellbeing) but falls short of addressing questions on the meaning, substance and value of wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations, thus making it difficult to develop a theoretical model or framework drawn from empirical or contextual perspectives. Typically, the wellbeing literature deals with large organisations (Cooper and Dewe, 2008; Wright and Cropanzano, 2000; Hartell et al., 2003; Moliner et al., 2008) or corporations that have the ability and resources to invest in workplace wellbeing initiatives or policies. Similarly, the entrepreneurship literature tends to rely on either the perspective of the entrepreneurs or the resources (for example, financial, human and social capital) that entrepreneurs can use to create, grow and manage their enterprises (Cason, 1982; Smith, 1967). These limitations open up opportunities to consider alternative theoretical lenses through which to interpret more closely and critically the subject of wellbeing, which has escaped the attention of researchers to date.

As explained in the Literature Review (Chapter two), I have explored the workplace wellbeing literature and the entrepreneurship literature, wherein I found various theories and concepts that displayed an inadequate understanding of wellbeing in



small entrepreneurial firms. In Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach (1999) I have found the promising prospect of adapting concepts, ideas and insights to help me analyse the findings, elucidate them theoretically and develop a framework for the critical study of wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations.

The key thing to note about Amartya Sen's Capabilities approach is that he is concerned with trying to provide a space for evaluating wellbeing in different contexts rather than fixing the evaluative criteria. Sen's idea of providing a fluid evaluative space is particularly useful for studying small, entrepreneurial firms because in these firms the nature of work and working relationships is fluid and often unstructured, and unlike larger firms where people have defined, competency-based roles, smaller firms tend to be much more aware of the dynamic capabilities of individuals working closely with the entrepreneur.

## **6.2. Summary of findings**

### ***An overview of critical issues***

Three aggregate themes emerged from the analysis of the raw data that was analysed and presented using the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013): the People factor, the Creative process and the Organisational structure, policies and procedures. These three themes allow for an encapsulation of the idea of employee wellbeing and its manifestation in all three case study organisations. They have a significant relationship to the wellbeing of employees working in small entrepreneurial organisations.

In each case, certain sub-themes varied, together with the impact that these sub-themes had on the wellbeing of employees. This meant that I had to discuss these

variations as well as the similarities in each case study organisation. For instance, communication was identified as a vital factor for all three firms, affecting their experiences of wellbeing at work. However, in each case study, the perceptions and meanings of what constituted communication and how it affected their wellbeing was unique. My interpretations were based on these subtle nuances and the interesting differences and similarities across these case study organisations.

All three case studies concerned small entrepreneurial organisations; however, they were diverse business entities given the nature of their business. Case study I was a social enterprise based in London, developing customised training modules for organisations to help understand employee mental health and wellbeing-related problems in the workplace. Case study II was a privately-owned community-based firm, a public house based in Colchester town, while case study III was a privately-owned high technology business based in Essex, working on high-end technological devices for calibration purposes in the oil and aviation industries. Since all the three organisations were small entrepreneurial organisations, we find many common sub-themes (such as having autonomy and flexibility at work, being opportunistic and proactive at work, shared values) that refer to similar issues but in different contexts and from unique perspectives. Moreover, there exists crossover and overlap between the sub-themes, as many of these are co-related and interlinked based on the participants' understanding of the issues and their individual interpretation and meanings.

### ***The main findings***

The main findings suggest that there is a significant link between workplace wellbeing and relationships that individuals share with other people. This includes both work-

based relationships and relationships with customers or clients. There are various factors that have an influence on how work-based relationships are shaped and evolve within these small organisations, such as the culture within the organisations (family-like, culture of change, culture of innovation or culture of blame), the nature of work and the lack of policies or procedure (or loose structure), taking into consideration the nature of employment, which could have an impact on how individuals working in a firm act and behave towards each other. In turn these factors are linked to how the employees feel at work and how this affects their personal wellbeing. In the context of entrepreneurial firms, my findings show that the formation, the development and the unravelling of these relationships may have a bearing on the entrepreneurial capacity and capabilities of the firm. Examining a causal relationship would have meant a different focus to the study but my assumptions about the entrepreneurial character of these firms might suggest that good, functional relationships contribute to the entrepreneurial capability of the firm. This finding is in line with the literature on entrepreneurial and innovative firms, which refers to shared vision and shared values among individuals, effective teams that facilitate innovation and a positive and creative climate within the firm (Tidd et al., 2013; Mitra, 2013).

Small firms have close correspondence between the employees and the entrepreneur, and the characteristics of the entrepreneur may have an impact on how the firm is managed, the organisational culture of the firm and its growth (Delmar and Witte, 2012). The empirical evidence supported this argument, and the relationship between the entrepreneur and his/her employees in all the case studies was considered to be extremely vital for the employees' wellbeing. This relationship was perceived by most employees as a close and comfortable relationship. However, in order for this relationship to induce positive wellbeing within them, it required open and clear communication, trust and honesty at work. Additionally, the passion for the mission

and shared values and vision among the members of these organisations were added factors that contributed to their positive wellbeing within these small entrepreneurial organisations. Having a shared vision also enabled the employees to act creatively at work and share a feeling of belonging with others in the firm.

All three small entrepreneurial organisations encouraged freedom to innovate and grow not only at firm-level, but also at individual level. This freedom was questioned by some employees when policies were put in place and protocols had to be followed. Therefore, here the most important factor that influences both the individual's wellbeing at work and the firm's outcomes is the person-company fit (*see Proposition 7 below*). If these small organisations pay more attention to understanding what kind of people they need in order to achieve desired outcomes and to sustain their entrepreneurial spirit, they will be able to recruit the right person for the right job. These organisations also need to understand the needs and personal aspirations of the individual they hire so that both the firm and the individual can gain the most out of this association. While it may not be possible to offer each employee an equally positive work experience and wellbeing outcome, this would at least create the conditions for positive wellbeing for the individual, which could translate into higher levels of productivity and happiness at work.

Small entrepreneurial organisations are best known for their ability to improve continuously and make new products and services (Mitra, 2013; Chell et al., 1991). However, not all employees in my three cases had the ability or skills to adapt quickly to this fast-paced environment. Therefore, the person-company fit and an assessment of the possibility of the individual thriving in such an environment should not only contribute to their personal wellbeing, but should also reduce the firm's attrition levels.

Training individuals and helping them continuously learn new things has also proven to be effective for workplace wellbeing. We need to understand that not every task within a small entrepreneurial firm is going to be exciting, creative or challenging, but employees need to find that balance between creative tasks and routine jobs. By understanding this balance, the individual as well as the firm would benefit manifold. In small entrepreneurial organisations, organisational policies and procedures (Tocher and Rutherford, 2009) play an important role in streamlining their existing business and shaping their future without compromising on the entrepreneurial spirit, and this was mirrored by the evidence of this study.

What we can gauge from this study is that individuals who work for small entrepreneurial organisations have their own needs and aspirations that they expect to fulfil at work. They desire autonomy at work, they wish to be a part of a meaningful job, to have a sense of purpose from what they do at work, and a feeling of belonging is important to them. They want to be valued and respected at work, to grow personally and professionally by gaining mastery in their job, and they want to enable positive relationships and experience positive emotions such as happiness, engagement, motivation and excitement at work. Studies suggest that entrepreneurs in small firms are more satisfied (Hundley, 2001) because of greater autonomy and control, less bureaucracy, more diverse challenges at work and personal relationships with employees (Tsai et al., 2007), and this study confirms these observations adding specifically the key point about the importance of these factors (such as autonomy, more diverse challenges at work and personal relationships), affecting how employees experience wellbeing in small firms.

Many of these aspirations were fulfilled or at least it was expected they would be fulfilled in small entrepreneurial firm contexts where there was the freedom and autonomy to act creatively, to innovate and create new things with tools such as knowledge sharing, training, learning and development and continuous improvements and upgrades at work. The participants also expressed how they felt when these organisations were able to give them the freedom to fail and make mistakes, considering that failures are the stepping stone to success, especially while indulging in ground-breaking innovation. The informants also perceived that these organisations accepted and respected them for who they were as individuals, in such a way that these organisations allowed them to be themselves and not give up on their personal goals, identities or interests while at work.

Small entrepreneurial firms exhibit innovative capabilities, which means they create new products, services or processes, they are strategic and insightful, they are opportunistic and proactive, and they exhibit a risk-taking behaviour, meaning they are flexible and can adapt to changing situations (Chan and Lau, 2010). The intention to grow (Georgelli et al., 2000) and an innovation/change orientation are characteristics of entrepreneurial behaviour that is exhibited by small entrepreneurial firms. Among all these characteristics, people are at the centre of small entrepreneurial organisations. In small, entrepreneurial firms, because the nature of work and working relationships is fluid and often unstructured (Cooper and Burke, 2011), and unlike larger firms where people have defined, competency-based roles, smaller firms tend to be much more aware of the dynamic capabilities of individuals working closely with the entrepreneur. Thus, the wellbeing of individuals in these firms is crucially dependent on relationships and also on individuals investing time, effort, personal aspirations, hopes and desires in these close kinship type relationships. Therefore,

when people are able to function well, their aspirations and expectations are met, and they exhibit the traits of being entrepreneurial.

### **6.3. Existing models/theories (wellbeing and entrepreneurship literature)**

#### ***Wellbeing as a multidimensional concept***

A range of wellbeing components relating to multiple wellbeing concepts emerged through the data. Across all three organisations, the informants would usually refer to multiple elements of wellbeing when describing or explaining their wellbeing experience and different people mentioned different components. This means that there is a possible heterogeneity of view in how participants interpret their experiences and give their own meanings about their wellbeing at work. Thus, we could suggest that workplace wellbeing is a multi-layered and multifaceted concept.

The complex nature of wellbeing has already been seen through the definitions given by Page and Vella-Brodrick's (2008), Ryan and Deci's (2001), and Huppert's (2009) arguments that hedonic<sup>3</sup> and eudaimonic<sup>4</sup> wellbeing should be combined in a wellbeing definition in order to capture the complete experience of wellbeing. However, my study shows that participants have identified the component measure of wellbeing to be beyond simply hedonic and eudaimonic aspects by including negative, common mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression and negative emotions including unhappiness, frustration, anger and sadness.

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<sup>3</sup> The hedonic conceptualisation of wellbeing understands it as an experience of happiness, satisfaction, and avoidance of pain (Kahnemann, Diener, and Schwarz, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> The "eudaimonic approach to wellbeing focuses on meaning and self-realization and defines wellbeing in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning" (Ryan and Deci, 2001, p. 141). This approach stems from Aristotle's work on eudaimonia, which states that real happiness can only be achieved when one identifies and develops one's virtues and lives in accordance to them (Charles and Scott, 1999; Franklin, 2010).

When individuals are asked to evaluate their wellbeing, they might offer different evaluations depending on which life facet they rate most (see Diener, 1999) and whether they base their evaluation on hedonic or eudaimonic aspects. Nevertheless, all evaluations relate to either positive experience or positive functioning, that is, the feeling of being well. While most of the existing POB and POS studies on wellbeing focus on positive aspects, they do not necessarily reflect on the in-depth understanding of how and why individuals experience these positive aspects within organisations. On the other hand, the stress-related studies focus primarily on the negative aspects of wellbeing and mental health issues (Cooper and Dewe, 2012; Cooper, 2007). There are a few studies that take a balanced approach, integrating both positive and negative aspects of wellbeing (Simmons and Nelson, 2007), but these studies focus more on the stress and attempt to provide a holistic model for looking at stress in the workplace. In my study, the employees identify both positive aspects of wellbeing, and negative aspects such as stress, anxiety, depression, and negative emotions such as unhappiness, frustration, anger and sadness.

Fineman (2006) contends that the separation of negative and positive facets of work experiences undermines the attempt to capture the richness and complexity of experiencing wellbeing at work. Here, the participants have discussed their experiences in terms of both stress and positive wellbeing, and therefore we take a balanced approach as suggested by Dewe and Cooper (2012), where we integrate stress and wellbeing. Therefore, we need a framework that is inclusive of the subjective wellbeing connotations of the participants and which allows a free-flowing definition of wellbeing in the workplace. Our case study respondents appear to suggest that may indeed be the case. It is possible that a balanced approach helps both the entrepreneurs and the employees to negotiate both their wellbeing and their entrepreneurial instincts. It is also possible that previous studies have not necessarily



grasped both the multidimensionality of and balanced approaches to wellbeing because they did not differentiate firms as entrepreneurial organisations in the way that my research purports to do.

Some scholars argue that it might be more useful seeing wellbeing as an umbrella term (Xanthopoulou et al., 2012) or as an area of study (Daniels, 2011) rather than a separate concept. I would argue that it is useful to conceptualise the experience of wellbeing as a multi-faceted phenomenon that can be conceptualised by including several theoretical concepts. Therefore, the term wellbeing can be used as an umbrella term, as it refers to several theoretical concepts but also as an area of study where all aspects of the experience of wellbeing (functional relationships in addition to experiential components) are included. Even more importantly, however, wellbeing should be viewed as an experience that is understood and therefore conceptualised differently depending on the context in which it is experienced and described. This is because every individual perceives and experiences wellbeing differently within different contexts. As my findings show, employees in all small, entrepreneurial firms experienced wellbeing differently, using their own subjective perception, but there were patterns that emerged when they connected these experiences to the contextual factors distinguishing each firm. Since the culture within small firms is continuously evolving and changing, it means that the employees' wellbeing is likely to change accordingly. Therefore, we need to look at wellbeing through an experiential angle located within specific contexts and cultural environments.

### ***Contextual considerations***

Numerous perspectives were compared that highlight the importance of recognising the influence of context. The stated heterogeneity depends on the work context in

which wellbeing is described, and the specific components of that concept, namely how wellbeing is understood and explained by the participants themselves. The context of small entrepreneurial organisations allowed for the consideration of several common factors and components of wellbeing as identified by the participants, but these factors require an understanding and recognition of the context, the job content and job role to help identify the particular components of wellbeing.

Several quantitative studies have been conducted in certain occupations to identify the specific stressors (see Langan-Fox and Cooper, 2011) in terms of wellbeing to understand what impact they have on wellbeing in large organisations (see Juniper et al., 2011). Several wellbeing theories, such as the holistic model of Eustress-Distress (Simmons and Nelson, 2007), the asset model of employee wellbeing (Johnson, 2008), the stress-related model (Karasek, 1979) and the job demand-control-support model (Karasek and Theorell, 1990) are still being used to understand the antecedents of wellbeing at work. However, my findings reveal the free-flowing subjective view of wellbeing in the context of small entrepreneurial organisations. This subjective free-flowing view is more useful because it helps us understand and interpret wellbeing within small entrepreneurial firms where the culture, processes, routines, structure and the people are continuously evolving (Mitra, 2013).

### ***Wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations***

In the entrepreneurship literature we find that very little is known about the relationships between entrepreneurs and their employees and, crucially, the affective functionalities of people working closely with the entrepreneur to seek entrepreneurial solutions to business creation and development problems. The centrality of the entrepreneur in entrepreneurship and innovation cannot be disputed. However, it is

inconceivable that successful, high impact ventures would be able to navigate Knightian uncertainty (Knight, 1921) and earn the entrepreneurial premium without the congruent factors of shared envisioning, combinatorial talent and skills, and creative dissonance, the totality of which is found in the wellbeing of both the entrepreneur and his or her organisational team. The literature makes assumptions about these factors, reflecting on innovative management functions and behaviour, but the voice of the 'others' in the entrepreneurial organisation is seldom heeded.

Entrepreneurship researchers have recently started paying attention to wellbeing, but the main focus again is on the heroic entrepreneur and overlooks the employees who work for entrepreneurs in entrepreneurial organisations. Researchers have started exploring the role of wellbeing in entrepreneurial task engagement (see Foo et al., 2009; Foo, 2011; Hahn et al., 2012), albeit from the entrepreneur's perspective. Studies have found that entrepreneurship can lead to high levels of stress (Monsen and Boss, 2009), fear (Mitchell et al., 2008), and grief (Jenkins et al., 2014), considering that the entrepreneurial process is uncertain and emotionally draining.

Some researchers are also exploring and building an integrative theoretical and empirical evidence base to understand and study the psychological mechanisms through which entrepreneurship affects wellbeing (Shir, 2015; Williams and Shepherd, 2016). Additionally, studies on entrepreneurial wellbeing (Shir, 2015) or positive affect (Baron, 2008) are centred on the charismatic magnificent entrepreneur (Uy et al., 2013). Some studies have proven that considering and giving attention to the mental health and wellbeing of the entrepreneur can be seen as a critical indicator of their success (Wach et al., 2016; Shir, 2015; Stephan, 2018) and in understanding the entrepreneurial action, motivations and decision-making (see Shepherd and Patzelt,

2015) in turn helps the firm to sustain its economic and social gains and benefits (Stephan, 2018).

The literature on entrepreneurial and innovative organisations (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) refers to the need for shared vision, the importance of creativity, autonomy and self-efficacy; but the literature is directed towards the locus of control of the entrepreneur (Mitra, 2017; Audretsch, 2012; Muzyka et al., 1995). The concept of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2017) extending the resource-based view of the firm (Penrose, 1959; Barney, 2001) focuses on the ability to introduce new resources and routines or re-shape the firm's existing resources and routines in the image and vision of its entrepreneur(s) and, in some cases, the management team (Zahra et al., 2006; Arthurs and Busenitz, 2006; Zahra and Filatotchev, 2004). These concepts talk very little about the dynamics of interactions between the entrepreneur(s) and the rest of the team of people, who together help to establish entrepreneurial organisations.

One may be cognisant of the typical measures used to measure entrepreneurial success, such as entrepreneurial orientation (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996, Covin and Wales, 2012, Covin et al., 2006, Stam and Elfring, 2008, Anderson et al., 2015), entrepreneurial behaviour and outcomes (de Vries, 2001), but there is a lack of clarity over their association or correlation with wellbeing. Even if there appears to be a critical understanding of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial success, entrepreneurial intentions (Shinnar et al., 2012), motivations, leadership (Ripoll et al., 2010, Renko et al., 2015), behaviour (Jong et al., 2015) and a social cognitive perspective (Hmieleski and Baron, 2009), at the level of individual entrepreneurs, and at the micro-contextual

level (Shane et al., 2003; Hayton, 2005; Avlonitis and Salavou, 2007; Baron, 2008), there is more to be learnt about their links with wellbeing at the organisational level.

The literature, therefore, appears to be less concerned with the role of employees in shaping and growing entrepreneurial firms. There is only limited coverage of issues covering the relationships between entrepreneurs and their employees and, crucially, the affective functionalities of people working closely with the entrepreneur to seek entrepreneurial solutions to business creation and development problems.

These conceptualisations do not help us understand the wellbeing of people within small firms. These representations of entrepreneurial wellbeing or wellbeing of the entrepreneur lack flexibility and the holistic approach wherein we look at both positive (hedonic and eudaimonic) as well as negative (stress, anxiety and depression) wellbeing experiences of people working in entrepreneurial firms. For instance, the concept of entrepreneurial wellbeing as defined by Shir (2015) is:

*“a positive and distinctive mental state, which reflects entrepreneurs’ affective and cognitive experiences of engagement in entrepreneurship as the process of venture creation. These experiences are characterized by positive judgments of the entrepreneurial life and good feelings about it.”*

In a nutshell, we can see that there is a dearth in both the wellbeing and entrepreneurship literature of understanding the wellbeing of employees working in small organisations, especially small entrepreneurial organisations and therefore, we are unable to use the existing theoretical models and frameworks to analyse the findings of this study. Smaller organisations lean towards networks, collaborations and

knowledge transfer routines to improve their innovative capabilities and competitive edge (Rogers, 2004; Zahra et al., 2000; Von Hippel, 1988). Therefore, the relationships, the workings and culture within small firms are free-flowing and continuously changing. Currently, we lack an approach that would help us capture and understand workplace wellbeing in the fluid, free-flowing nature of small entrepreneurial firms.

### ***The Capabilities Approach to Wellbeing in Small Entrepreneurial Firms***

Using Amartya Sen's 'Capabilities Approach' to interpret the wellbeing of employees within small entrepreneurial organisations therefore seems apt here. The 'Capabilities Approach' offers an evaluative space for understanding and assessing the structures, routines, policies, tools and methods available in small entrepreneurial organisations in terms of organisational capabilities and their relationship to employees' wellbeing.

The key thing to note about Amartya Sen's Capabilities approach is that he is concerned with trying to evaluate wellbeing rather than define it. Sen is defining the 'evaluative space' rather than fixing the evaluative criteria. Given that any assessment of wellbeing will be undertaken in a specific context and because we wish to retain some flexibility in any definition of wellbeing, it makes sense to use this approach. Therefore, we make use of the subjective view and definitions of wellbeing as expressed by the participants in this study (please refer to Chapter 4).

Before we move on to discussing Sen's Capabilities Approach in understanding wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms, it would be useful to re-capture the initial set of propositions that were developed based on the literature review.

*Proposition 1 (P1): Workplace wellbeing in a small entrepreneurial organisation is not only a critical parameter to be included while determining the organisational success but also makes the business more sustainable for future growth;*

*Proposition 2 (P2): Small Entrepreneurial organisations are better able to improve performance by understanding what augments and hampers workplace wellbeing, in order to have sustainable innovative growth in a highly productive environment;*

*Proposition 3 (P3): Dysfunctional (small) entrepreneurial organisations breed a culture of stress, anxiety and negative wellbeing which over time can adversely impact sustainability and growth.*

Considering the role of people and how people form an integral part of small entrepreneurial firms. The initial propositions (P1 and P2) advocated the role and importance of wellbeing in such firms and how small firms are better able to understand what matters or affects their people's wellbeing at work. The importance of this understanding was, being able to grow and sustain entrepreneurial success. These propositions were deduced from the literature review and therefore, were comprehensive and broad. The exploratory nature of this research investigating the wellbeing of employees in small entrepreneurial firms, helped discover in-depth empirical data which helped to devise more specific and detailed propositions which follow in the later section. In light of the empirical findings and the use of Sen's Capabilities Approach to interpret these findings, the above propositions need to be advanced and refined in order to gain a deeper and richer understanding of wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms.

#### **6.4. Using Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach: Exploring wellbeing of people in small entrepreneurial firms**

Now that we have fair idea of what the Capabilities Approach is and the various nuances of this approach, we need to understand how this approach is useful in understanding the wellbeing of people in small entrepreneurial firms.

First, this approach has helped me locate all the different aspects of individuals' aspirations, including their relationships with the entrepreneur, colleagues and external agents associated with the organisation, plus their sense of ownership, together with the different meanings of wellbeing, in a defined learning space by encapsulating the various meanings in a specific, abstract category of 'functionings'. This has enabled me to generalise the different conceptions and perceptions of wellbeing at work.

Second, the Capabilities Approach helps me to propose a defined space for understanding and assessing the organisational capabilities such as people, routines, structures, processes, policies, tools and methods available in organisations. Sen does not refer to organisational capabilities but interpreting these features of an organisation as 'organisational capabilities' could help us to regard entrepreneurial firms as living and evolving entities instead of a mere and static amalgam of assets and other resources. These organisational capabilities support and enable the realisation of individual functionings and eventually 'achieved functionings' or the individual capability set.



Third, by combining the above points and adapting them to the micro level context of the firm, this approach provides us with a valuable mechanism for comprehending a fresh approach to wellbeing, as it helps to operationalise it in the context of individual firms. In applying it to entrepreneurial firms and relationships, a sense of ownership, structures and policies and the creative process in those firms, I extend the scope of the adaptation further and connect achieved functioning and capabilities as proxies of wellbeing to the development of an entrepreneurial environment for firms. By applying the constraints of small firms, I am able to triangulate capabilities, entrepreneurial firms and wellbeing in specific types of firm.

Amartya Sen's idea of not confining the capabilities to any particular set or outcomes, but understanding them in light of the context, leaves us with an evaluative space that is useful for exploring the wellbeing phenomenon in small entrepreneurial firms. An evaluative space offers us the possibility of studying agency principal relationships, such as those between employees and entrepreneurs in fast moving and fluid environments. The nature of work and working relationships in small firms are extremely free-flowing and continuously evolving and changing. They are often unstructured, and unlike larger firms where people have defined, competency-based roles, smaller firms tend to rely on sharing and collaborative forms of working where the collaboration is a function of the fulfilment of personal aspirations mixed with organisational objectives. The loose structures and proximity to the entrepreneur offer employees greater possibilities of tying up their personal aspirations with objective job-related requirements. There is consequently much more awareness of the dynamic capabilities of individuals working closely with the entrepreneur. Thus, the wellbeing of individuals in these firms is crucially dependent on relationships and also on individuals investing time, effort, personal aspirations, hopes and desires in these close relationships.

An entrepreneurial organisation is known for its creativity, its effective optimal relations between people, good organisational practice and sense of ownership. The formation and development of each of these key elements constitutes capabilities. This also resonates with elements such as people, structure and environment, which are derived from the literature and used in the coding structure (Mitra, 2013). Together they may be conceived as organisational capabilities. From a theoretical standpoint, I interpret these elements (people, structure and environment) using Sen's Capabilities Approach.

Overall, most participants expressed that eudaimonic wellbeing aspects such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose of life, self-acceptance, positive relationships and hedonic aspects of being happy and satisfied at work, were the things they would like to achieve whilst working in small entrepreneurial organisations. These therefore could be regarded as their functionings because these are the people's aspirations and desires that they wish to achieve, various 'doings and beings'.

The participants also expressed their perception about the firm's culture, organisational practices and the people they dealt with inside and outside the organisation. Using Amartya Sen's approach, we would interpret these elements as organisational capabilities; that is, the opportunities and systems that enable people to achieve their functionings. In this organisation people expressed all they wished to accomplish, and the elements within the organisational capability set enabled them to achieve (some of) these functionings, which then became their 'achieved functionings', which in this case was linked to positive emotions and positive wellbeing. When their functionings cannot be achieved there is a greater likelihood of an occurrence of

negative emotions and negative wellbeing (stress, anxiety or depression) amongst people, resulting in a disjunct between the firm and its employees. This happens because there is a mismatch between the individual's capability and the firm's capability settings.

The achieved 'functionings' can also be regarded as a composite of the individual's own capabilities, the socially created ones of status and networking embedding, and the external capabilities or the abilities to function that depend on direct human relationships (Foster and Handy, 2009). Thus, workplace wellbeing is not only achieved through individual functionings but also through the interaction of the capabilities of the individuals and those of the firm, especially in a constrained environment such as in a small entrepreneurial firm. This is made possible by ensuring that there is an adequate level of creativity, sense of ownership, organisational practice and relational assets. The entrepreneurial organisations and the mix of the creative process, ownership, organisational structure and practice and relational assets that constitute their organisational processes, providing the evaluative space in which the employees or individuals can try to identify and achieve their functionings.

The overall findings show that both hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing (or deficit thereof) can be critical contributors to continuous innovation and creativity. As small enterprises, our respondent organisations are dependent on how employees are able to use their creativity, organisational routines, personal identities, social interactions, autonomy, sense of ownership and relational assets, as a set of capabilities for achieving wellbeing for innovative practices. Capabilities are defined as the freedom to do things at work, pursuing one's own interests, having a work-life balance and the ability to make things happen.

What follows is a critical analysis of each of the four elements constituting organisational capabilities using the findings against the literature and especially Sen's framework.

#### **6.4.1. Relational Assets and Wellbeing**

This exploratory study shows that the wellbeing of employees is multifaceted and complex, especially in small entrepreneurial organisations. The issues of positive and negative wellbeing are not directly associated with any specific body of knowledge, skillset or competency. The respondents do note, however the possible effects of their affective status on these components of human capital. We can, therefore, see a clear relationship between wellbeing and human capital based on perceptions and behaviour, which has a bearing on the operations of these organisations.

An innovative orientation is possible only by focusing on people; a creative climate that encourages innovation, continuous improvement, optimum resource mobilisation and value creation (Muzyka et al., 1995). These characteristics are shaped and realised by people who are driven by their orientation, a 'felt need' to distinguish themselves as creative agents of change, economic and social progress. The human factor (as in 'human capital' or the skill set of people, and critically, their levels of satisfaction and wellbeing) plays a significant role in enabling entrepreneurial organisations to make a high impact (Marvel et al., 2016; Unger et al., 2011; Ardichvili et al., 2003).

Entrepreneurship research using human capital as an independent variable has been restricted commonly to an individual's (the entrepreneur) knowledge, skills,

competencies, education and learning (Ireland et al., 2005; Keith and Frese, 2005). Studies on dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2017; Kevill et al., 2017; Barreto, 2010; Dosi et al., 2001; Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990), routines (Cohen et al., 1996; Winter, 1995; Nelson and Winter, 1982), innovative organisations (Mitra, 2017; Tidd et al., 2013; Glor, 2013; Johnson, 2001; Miller and Friesen, 1982), and new venture management (Marchisio et al., 2010; Gruber, 2007; Hayton and Zahra, 2005; Delmar and Shane, 2004) identify the significance of people other than the entrepreneur, but mainly from the perspective of the entrepreneur. We do not necessarily obtain any insight into wellbeing factors as discussed earlier. When we turn our attention to the employees of entrepreneurial firms and shed light on their perceptions and experiences of wellbeing, we begin to discover and understand how their relationships can be seen as critical to the formation and development of entrepreneurial firms.

In case study I (social enterprise), the participants' expression of open communication within the firm, the freedom to grow and fail, being able to continuously make improvements at work and sharing knowledge, could be interpreted as 'functionings'. Evidence also suggests that employees are aware that their own knowledge, competencies, skills and experience in addition to the organisational capability space, helps them to achieve their functionings. Furthermore, the employees understand that their human capital advances and improves as they work in a small entrepreneurial organisation where there is immense opportunity to grow and to learn new and improved ways of creating new products, services or processes. This enables positive wellbeing among the employees, which in turn enhances the overall wellbeing of the firm and augments the human capital of small entrepreneurial organisations.

Moreover, factors such as work-life balance, having an enthusiastic workplace and a feeling that the organisation cares about them gave them a general feeling of happiness and satisfaction at work, which according to Diener (1994) was a way to measure wellbeing at work. The relation of job satisfaction to hedonic wellbeing is established by indicating whether they experience desirable features of their job that enable them to feel satisfied and happy with their work. Human capital is generally conceived in terms of educational attainments, skill levels, formal and informal knowledge (Becker, 1994). In small firms, much of this is attained informally and observations are generally made in relation to the utilitarian value of such capital to the firm. By adding issues of wellbeing in terms of achievement and fulfilment of aspirations, human capital can be said to be given a new and original dimension which is associated with how people can evaluate their personal fulfilment alongside their use value to an organisation. Consequently, I argue that the achievement of 'functionings' enhances the human capital of the entrepreneurial organisation and in turn enables positive entrepreneurial outcomes. This enhanced view of relationships within entrepreneurial firms, governed by issues of functionings and capabilities, leads me to the first of a set of new propositions (P4):

*Relational assets (people factor) and wellbeing (P4): Optimal use of relational assets is possible in small entrepreneurial organisations when they enable the achievement of 'functionings' (wellbeing) as capabilities of all people in such organisations.*

On one end, the achievement of functionings related to positive relationships in the workplace resonates into positive (hedonic and eudaimonic) wellbeing. Whereas on the other end, the lack of achievement of these functionings can be detrimental to the wellbeing of individuals, causing stress at work.

#### **6.4.2. Ownership at work and Wellbeing**

For some employees who were flexible and very adaptive by nature, the idea of achieving hedonic wellbeing through autonomy and empowerment was not so important, thus contradicting the notion of wellbeing achieved through these means being important for entrepreneurial organisations. We found that, with or without empowerment, structure/routines play an important role, particularly for eudaimonic wellbeing and innovation. Along similar lines, we noted a dichotomy in the perception of employees when linking their job role to their wellbeing at work. Some felt that not having a strict job role/design was liberating, giving them full autonomy to be creative at work; while others perceived it as a negative attribute because they felt they were doing everything at work without having the skills or capabilities or a viable structure for their tasks. This suggests that attention to detail in entrepreneurial management, in terms of structure and coordination, is critical to the encouragement of employees and continuous improvement of the firm. The hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing appear to balance out in these situations.

In all three cases, the sense of ownership allows people to be better motivated for their own creativity and for reaching out to customers/clients. We found that motivation was a function of collective thought processes at work, especially in case study I, where collective sharing and contributing to a higher cause (a social enterprise working towards mental health issues and promoting wellbeing) was positively co-related to satisfaction at work. A sense of collective eudaimonic wellbeing could be seen as a positive factor in facilitating openness and adaptability to the fast-paced entrepreneurial culture of innovative small organisations.

I have already alluded to the ownership issue as part of an employee's sense of worth in an organisation. This can manifest itself in terms of either total autonomy, strictly delineated job descriptions, or somewhere in between. The ability to find an appropriate platform in which to engage with one's work (establish sense of ownership) can be regarded as a necessary means for achieving functionings. This leads to our next set of new propositions (P5):

*Ownership at work (people factor) and wellbeing (P5): Features or 'functionings' such as autonomy, flexibility at work, collective responsibility, shared vision/values and passionate leadership (also including personality traits) trigger a sense of ownership of organisational practices and innovation outcomes for entrepreneurial organisations;*

The nature and scope of such practices generate productive routines at work (see P7 below) which are best used to foster creative capabilities. Ownership-oriented practices can have both positive and negative effects on mental health and wellbeing, and adversely affect the capabilities of people in entrepreneurial organisations.

#### **6.4.3. The Creative Process and Wellbeing**

In case study II (public house), participants regarded creating new products and services, being able to take their own decisions at work, being able to improve continuously and sharing knowledge at work to be vital for them to feel as though they had autonomy and were in control, gaining environmental mastery and personal growth. They associated these factors with eudaimonic wellbeing constructs that had been laid down by Ryff (1989). She mentioned them as psychological wellbeing dimensions: (1) purpose in life, (2) environmental mastery, (3) positive relationships, (4) autonomy, (5) personal growth, (6) self acceptance. The participants in this firm also expressed a general sense of happiness as they were getting what they wanted



out of their jobs. These eudaimonic factors therefore constitute the functionings an individual has which he/she expects to achieve by using his/her own capabilities and the firm's capabilities.

In case study III (hi-tech firm), participants stated that factors such as having freedom to grow and fail, training, learning and development, being proactive at work, knowledge sharing, creating new products and services and having freedom to take their own decisions at work induced eudaimonic wellbeing. That is to say, they felt they were gaining environmental mastery, they had autonomy and were in control and also that they were growing both personally and professionally. Moreover, having a good work-life balance, having a feeling that the organisation cares about them and having an enthusiastic workplace induced in them the feeling of being happy and satisfied at work. In this case, these hedonic attributes of wellbeing are the functionings that the individuals wish to achieve and when the factors within the firm enable them to achieve these functionings, they become achieved functionings.

Achieved functionings could be referred to as positive wellbeing (hedonic and eudaimonic) or negative wellbeing (stress, anxiety or depression). This study takes a free-flowing definition of wellbeing as it includes the subjective view expressed by the individuals themselves, which includes positive emotions, hedonic, eudaimonic, negative emotions and stress under the umbrella term 'wellbeing'. The findings reflect that more eudaimonic than hedonic aspects of wellbeing were emphasised by the participants across all the case study organisations when they described positive wellbeing experiences at work. This is similar to a workplace wellbeing study conducted by Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2011), as they also found that people described their wellbeing at work using eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing. Then when

they expressed experiences that inflicted negative emotions and negative wellbeing they referred to terms such as frustration, anger, unhappiness, stress, anxiety or depression. These considerations allow me to consider another new set of propositions (P6):

*The creative process and wellbeing (P6): Factors such as space, time, empowerment, role clarity, appreciation, freedom to fail, nature and intensity of work and emotional demands at work, act as creative building blocks for achieving capabilities in entrepreneurial organisations;*

The achievement of functionings such as positive (hedonic and eudaimonic) wellbeing at work manifests through various factors such as empowerment, role clarity, appreciation, freedom to fail, nature and intensity of work, which enables the creative process within small entrepreneurial firms. However, a lack of capabilities to achieve the functionings (positive wellbeing) can have an adverse effect on an individual's mental health by causing negative emotions and stress at work. Thus, we understand that a creative work-related agenda can have both positive and negative effects on wellbeing and mental health at work in entrepreneurial organisations.

#### **6.4.4. Organisational policies, procedure and structure at work and Wellbeing**

Many of the factors reflected back to the organisational structure and routines within small entrepreneurial organisations. According to Nelson and Winter (1982), the organisational capabilities arise from routines, which they termed as 'genes' in innovation. They defined routines as the most regular and foreseeable behaviour of the organisations, which form an integral part of the culture within entrepreneurial organisations. As per the literature, the term 'routines' seems to refer mostly to

recurrent interaction patterns, that is, collective recurrent activity patterns. Routines have numerous features: they are patterns, repetitive and persistent, collective, non-deliberative and self-actuating, of a processual nature, context-dependent, embedded, specific, and path dependent (Becker, 2004).

The findings show that all three small entrepreneurial organisations lack to some extent these types of routine with the above characteristics. The findings suggest that there are very few operational routines that are mainly processual in nature and there are many innovating routines that are self-actuating, embedded and non-deliberate. It is evident that these routines are seen “to co-ordinate and control, provide 'truce', economise on cognitive resources, reduce uncertainty, lead to inertia, provide stability and enable and constrain, act as triggers, and embody knowledge” within an organisation (Becker, 2004). However, the findings show that there is a lack of balance between the operational and innovative routines across all the three organisations.

In all three organisations, employees and entrepreneurs can become easy prey to dysfunctionality when, for example, proper routines are not in place, rewards are not shared and where information does not flow freely. Various employees were affected by it and their disenchantment with the ‘malfunctionings’ were manifestations of ‘negative wellbeing’. We find that in all cases, the fragility of their operations as small organisations could pull the rug of sustainability from under the feet of both employees and entrepreneurs. We would have expected that case study III (thirty plus years in business) and case study I (fourteen plus years) would have been in a better position to develop and harness these capabilities, but this did not appear to be the case. In case study II (two plus years), the need for survival or the quick success of its innovations can be predicated upon quick consolidation of those outcomes at the

expense of the employees. We note that routines can be disrupted when participants in a routine start 'acting in a manner that is more individual than collective' (Weick 1990, p. 579). Using Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach we could look at the routines as an integral part of the organisational structure in a small entrepreneurial firm, which becomes the organisational capability set or the evaluative space that enables the individuals to achieve their functionings.

The findings suggest that the wellbeing of employees in small entrepreneurial organisations is a probable critical parameter for both individual achievement and organisational success. The findings show that there may not be any automatic correlation between the two, but rather the cognitive and affective aspects of individual behaviour, their personal roles, their 'functionings' and their levels of appreciation of the work environment have different impacts on their hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. A strong personal motivation may be tied to a perceived organisational identity, but how this plays out in terms of entrepreneurial outcomes is dependent on practices, procedures and perceptions. Based on these arguments, I propose a fourth new proposition (P7):

*Organisational processes and policies(P7): Organisational processes and policies such as explicit routines, implicit expectations, person-company fit, learning and development opportunities, highly driven teams, continuous improvements at work contribute to the achievement of 'functionings' and wellbeing as capability in entrepreneurial organisations;*

The organisational processes and policies within small firms are mainly focused on improving organisational and individual capabilities, which enables individuals to

achieve functioning of positive experiences of wellbeing at work. However, small entrepreneurial organisations do not have exclusive policies and procedures that support the achievement of 'functionings' and wellbeing as capability. Thus, pay attention to devising structure and policies at work which focuses on improving the individual and organisational capabilities, is of utmost importance in order to grow and sustain entrepreneurial success.

At this juncture while reflecting back to our initial propositions (P1, P2 and P3), we could say that relational assets, ownership-oriented practices, the creative process, the organisational structure, policies and practices all are crucial element which affects the wellbeing of people within small entrepreneurial firms. These factors not only results in positive (hedonic and eudaimonic) wellbeing but could also consequences in dysfunctionality and negative wellbeing at work. The propositions (P4 to P7) are a resultant of the empirical findings and their theoretical underpinning using Sen's framework; making them more detailed and specific in order to explain the wellbeing of people in small entrepreneurial firms.

Some prominent negative aspects that surfaced from the data referred to work-based relationships, the relationship with the entrepreneur, and the management structure/routines within small entrepreneurial organisations. For instance, there were issues of communication, trust and honesty between the employees and the entrepreneur across all three cases which led them to feel de-valued and disengaged from work. This might reflect the relative weakness of management structures and organisational arrangements within small businesses, however innovative they might be. These barriers curb the enthusiasm and creativity of individuals. When the individuals were not achieving their functionings – that is, having positive relationships,

autonomy, fulfilling organisational and personal goals, personal growth, a sense of purpose and meaning in what they were doing at work – it resulted in negative emotions such as frustration, anger, unhappiness and negative wellbeing which they expressed as stress, anxiety or depression in various circumstances.

Moreover, we note that there is a need for a better understanding of different types of wellbeing at the organisational level. These levels of understanding vary considerably across the different themes of enquiry and because of asymmetries in the expectations of individual employees and entrepreneurs. The fact that they are different types of organisation does not necessarily make a difference. It is possible that in a small firm context it is difficult to have effective management capabilities for relational asset management, policies and procedures, structures and strategies. A coherent approach may work for instance in case study I, because of the strong sense of fulfilling a social mission by all (positive eudaimonic wellbeing). However, this is impugned when we find distortions in policies and procedures or where there are cognitive differences between entrepreneurs and employees. In many situations, there is a tendency to let situations and relationships evolve (for instance in case study II), which contradicts the entrepreneur's fixation with his locus of control.

The distance between the entrepreneurs (in case study I and II) and the employees, even in small dynamic organisations, compromises the individual's aspirations for personal achievement or the broader capacity to innovate. Where there is freedom of expression as individuals (pub employees doubling up as artists exhibiting their work, in case study II), there is a strong sense of belonging. This is again held in check by a sense of frustration over procedures and transparency in the use of information at work. For instance, in a high technology firm we would expect employees to be well-versed and accepting of the continuously changing environment within the firm,

considering that technology changes in the blink of an eye and there are several mutations within a small span of time. However, in case study III, there was seen to be a resistance to change and improvements by certain individuals. Further, there was a negative impact on individual wellbeing because of the lack of knowledge sharing within the firm. These imbalances affected the wellbeing of employees considering their functionings were not met or enabled in the entrepreneurial space.

The complexity of the analysis across all four aggregate themes allows me to develop a framework integrating Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach and the findings of this study.

#### **6.5. The Framework: Employee Wellbeing in Small Entrepreneurial Organisations**

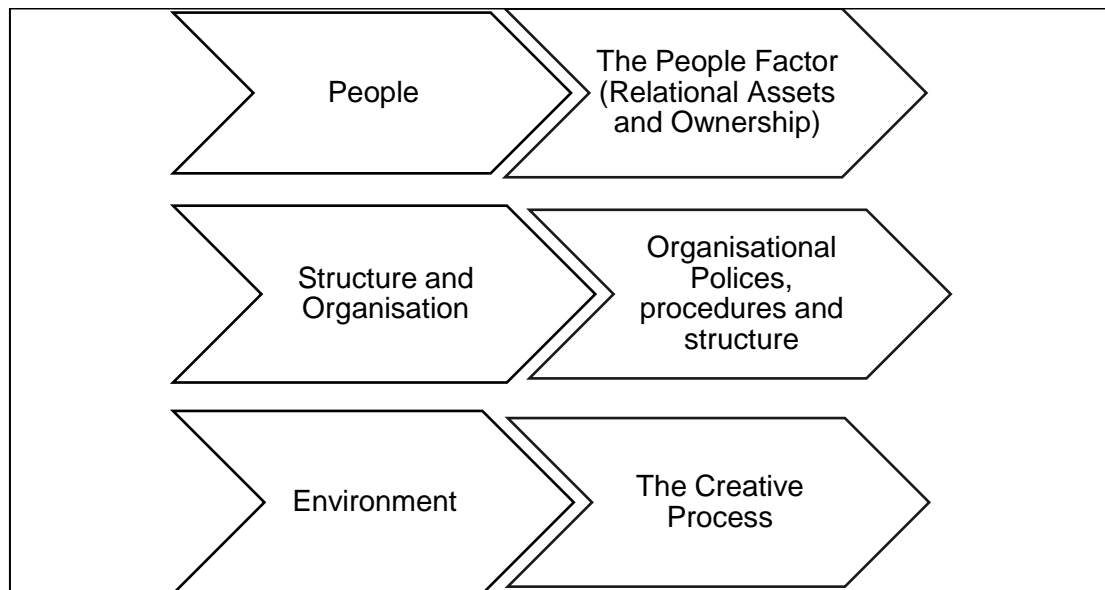
One can expect, without risking tautology, that one of the entrepreneur's functionings is being entrepreneurial (Gries and Naude, 2011; Naude, 2013; Naude et al., 2008; Baumol, 1990) and having the means to be so. This is often interpreted in terms of his or her entrepreneurial orientation, self-efficacy and planned behaviour. Employees would also wish to achieve their functionings in entrepreneurial settings. However, it is also found that if the entrepreneur ignores the functionings of the employees because of their need to grow and make a profit at any cost or achieve selfish objectives, the wellbeing of employees can be negatively affected. In most small firms, there is a tendency to ignore the people-related issues (HRM) until it becomes of the utmost necessity (Cooper and Burke, 2011), however, the evidence suggests that looking at the various functionings of individuals, especially in small firms, could be extremely beneficial for the firm.

I found several functionings that were vital to employees in being entrepreneurial at work, such as having autonomy at work, personal growth, having a sense of purpose and meaning at work, being able to have flexibility at work, positive relationships, being able to interact freely with people within and outside the firm, allowing personal identities at work, being able to grow and fail, being able to learn and develop new skills and capabilities. These were functionings identified by employees of all the three case study organisations. Therefore, the ability of the firm itself to function as a sustainable entrepreneurial organisation is partly dependent on how well the organisation can attain synergy between their people (including the entrepreneur), the creative process and the organisational policies and procedures. At the heart of wellbeing and entrepreneurial endeavour lies the wellbeing of people.

These empirical findings had a connection with the initial conceptual constructs used to define a small entrepreneurial firm, that is, people, structure and organisation and environment. The aggregate themes which emerged out of the findings were refined and more specific constructs that evolved from the literature (Refer to Figure 10 below). Thus, elements important within small entrepreneurial firms were derived as the People Factor, the Creative Process and Organisational Structure, Policies and Procedures. These elements formed the organisational capability set which were the various tools within the firm to help individuals function. The constructs used to explain wellbeing at work (sense of purpose, positive emotions and negative wellbeing) evolved and translated into hedonic, eudaimonic and stress respectively based on the empirical findings. The elements of positive wellbeing were identified by individuals as vital, while discussing their wellbeing at work. In light of Sen's approach, these elements were termed as 'functionings' and when achieved could prove to have positive or negative wellbeing at work.



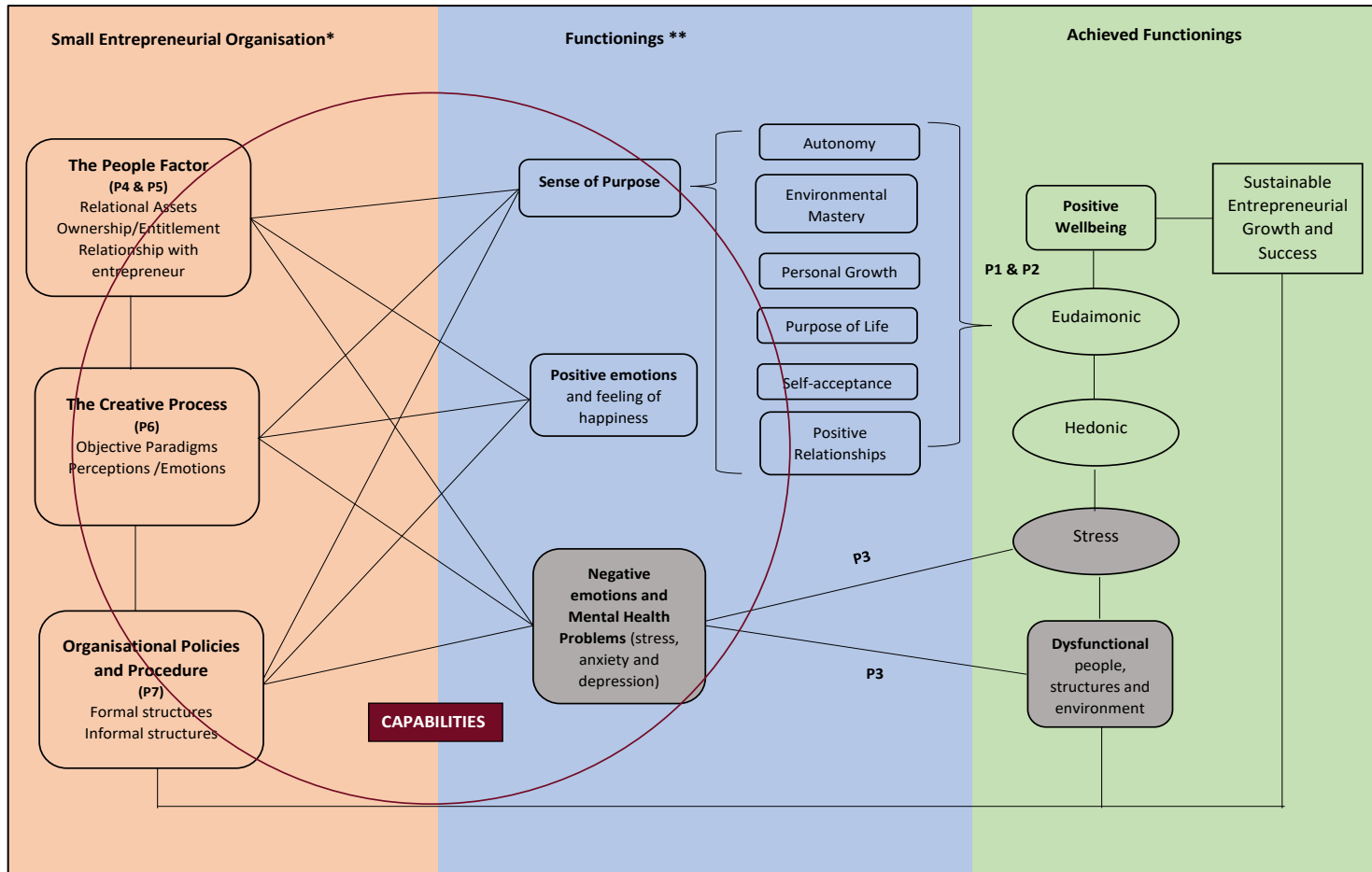
Figure 10: Connection between conceptual constructs and aggregate themes



**Source:** \*Mitra (2013); Tidd et al (2013); Simon (2009); Westland (2008); Prahalad and Krishnan (2008) Kim and Maubogne (2005); Galbraith (2004); Muzyka (1999);

Integrating my interpretations of the findings into Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach, I am proposing a framework that would help us understand the nuances of wellbeing experiences of people within small entrepreneurial firms. Figure 9 below captures in diagrammatic form the details of the framework.

Figure 11: Framework to understand employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations using Amartya Sen’s capabilities approach: A People-Oriented Perspective



Source: \*Mitra (2013); Tidd et al (2013); Simon (2009); Westland (2008); Prahalad and Krishnan (2008) Kim and Maubogne (2005); Galbraith (2004); Muzyka (1999); \*\*Sen (1984,1993,1997,1999); Ryff and Keyes (1995); Robertson and Cooper (2011); Reid and Ramarajan (2016)

Considering this is an exploratory qualitative study, the framework is a mere representation of the theoretical understanding of the findings. Therefore, the lines in the figure merely represent some links and associations but do not imply any causality or the sequence in which they occur within the said context. The different shades of colour helps us to understand the various elements within the main constructs. For instance, small entrepreneurial organisations consist of people, the creative process and organisational policies and procedures. Each main proposition and their sub-propositions are signposted in the framework for better clarity and understanding. The red circle encircling both the small entrepreneurial organisation and the functionings is represented as the capability set. The grey coloured boxes represent the negative aspects of wellbeing. This framework has evolved from the empirical data and therefore, it is more advanced than the conceptual framework (please refer to 2.3.3 in Chapter Two).

The framework signifies the vital elements within small entrepreneurial firms that have a bearing on how employees feel at work and how their wellbeing is affected at work. Sen's Capabilities approach has helped me locate all the different aspects of individuals' aspirations, including their relationships with the entrepreneur, colleagues and external agents associated with the organisation, plus their sense of ownership, together with the different meanings of wellbeing, in a defined learning space by encapsulating the various meanings in a specific, abstract category of 'functionings'. This has enabled me to generalise the different conceptions and perceptions of wellbeing at work.

Additionally, the framework helps to propose a defined space for understanding and assessing the organisational capabilities such as people, routines, structures,

processes, policies, tools and methods available in organisations. Sen does not refer to organisational capabilities but interpreting these features of an organisation as 'organisational capabilities' could help us to regard entrepreneurial firms as living and evolving entities instead of a mere and static amalgam of assets and other resources. These organisational capabilities support and enable the realisation of individual functionings and eventually 'achieved functionings' or the individual capability set.

Third, by combining the above points and adapting them to the micro level context of the firm, this approach provides us with a valuable mechanism for comprehending a fresh approach to wellbeing, as it helps to operationalise it in the context of individual firms. In applying it to entrepreneurial firms and relationships, a sense of ownership, structures and policies and the creative process in those firms, I extend the scope of the adaptation further and connect achieved functioning and capabilities as proxies of wellbeing to the development of an entrepreneurial environment for firms. By applying the constraints of small firms, I am able to triangulate capabilities, entrepreneurial firms and wellbeing in specific types of firm.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

This chapter encapsulates the understanding of wellbeing of employees working in small entrepreneurial organisations by referring to the literature on wellbeing and entrepreneurial organisations. The critical analysis reveals several shortcomings in the existing literature, making it difficult to obtain a critical understanding of people-based relationships and wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms. Given the topical importance of the subject of wellbeing discussed at the beginning of my thesis, coupled with my own interest in searching for possible explanations, I have sought alternative theories and concepts and connected them to the existing literature. Using the lens

of Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach, I have shown in this chapter how this theoretical approach gives us the freedom to explain wellbeing as a phenomenon within an evaluative space (small entrepreneurial firm) where there are organisational and individual capabilities, the combination of which suggests possibilities of harnessing the best value in entrepreneurial firms for employees, the entrepreneur and the firm. Individuals have the freedom to choose from the various functionings and achieved positive wellbeing experiences. These critical considerations have led me to make four new propositions with which to develop a framework for the evaluation of wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms. This development is the core outcome with which I am able to offer genuinely original insight and prospects for a new arena of study in the fields of both wellbeing and entrepreneurship.

The next chapter will discuss the contribution, implications and limitations of this study, with some suggestions for a future research agenda.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

### **7.1. Theoretical Contributions**

This study has made certain critical contributions to the field of entrepreneurship and wellbeing. Considering this thesis is multi-disciplinary, there are multiple contributions made to enrich the existing knowledge of workplace wellbeing in the entrepreneurship literature. Firstly, the framework, which explains workplace wellbeing within small entrepreneurial organisations using Amartya Sen's Capabilities approach, is a novel and fresh perspective on this topic. The framework with the revised set of propositions is a result of a rigorous study of wellbeing at work in small entrepreneurial organisations, which is the main contribution that this thesis makes. This study is different from the research about employee management in small firms because they talk about it in terms of the relationship between principal and agent, whereas this study takes an innovative perspective in terms of studying workplace wellbeing in terms of nature of relations, the creative process and the structure and environment within a small firm.

Secondly, this study uses Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach in studying wellbeing at an organisational level, which attempts to mitigate the limitations argued by Miles (2013). This study gives due importance to the structures within which the individuals are living together. In this context it is the organisational set-up and structure to which we refer, in order for the individuals to advance their freedom, and this study also gives due importance to the role of other individuals in this context; the colleagues and the entrepreneur himself. Therefore, the relationships between social environment and the individuals are not just acknowledged but given a vital role while understanding their perceptions of workplace wellbeing. This study makes a critical contribution to the

entrepreneurship literature by using Sen's approach to understand wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms, where people are an important factor and therefore, this thesis argues that it is important to consider the wellbeing of the people in small firms. This additional lens of wellbeing changes how we see small entrepreneurial firms, because we have understood the importance and perceived value of wellbeing in such firms.

Thirdly, the context of small entrepreneurial organisation has been added to the workplace wellbeing literature. The wellbeing of people at work has dominated the headlines of numerous business and research publications recently. Studies and surveys have addressed issues of wellbeing, happiness and mental health (see Dodd & Jack, 2017; Baird-Murray, 2017; Ahuja, 2017; Skapinker, 2016; Jacobs, 2016). The current statistics are compelling companies to look at workplace wellbeing as an urgent and important factor essential to successful business outcomes.

## **7.2. Implications and Impact of the study**

This research has implications for the study of entrepreneurial organisations, particularly the nature and scope of relationships between employees and the entrepreneurs in those organisations. I believe that this is a novel approach to the study of such organisations because existing studies tend to focus attention on either the "heroes" who create these enterprises, or an abstract sense of collective cohesion driven by highly motivational entrepreneurs at the helm of affairs. There appears to be only a limited amount of empirical evidence to indicate that the wellbeing of employees has a bearing on the innovative outcomes of an organisation. Exploring these issues in the context of small entrepreneurial firms places a higher level of premium on innovation generated through effective working relationships. Academic researchers could be inspired by this study which would enable them to look at wellbeing of people

(not just the entrepreneur) within entrepreneurial firms which is extremely vital in order to grow and sustain an entrepreneurial firm.

Small entrepreneurial organisations are considered to be extremely important due the impact they have in terms of creation of more and better jobs, economic growth, productivity growth, creation of “lead markets”, increased SME competitiveness, poverty reduction, mastering of globalisation challenges, reduction of informal economy, enhancement of job satisfaction, growth of work force flexibility and stopping the emigration of talent (OECD, 2007). Therefore, understanding how workplace wellbeing manifests within such organisations will help the policy makers within governmental and educational institutions to consider promoting alternative approaches to innovation management that places greater emphasis on the role of wellbeing in sustaining a new form of entrepreneurial ecology. People are not just a commodity or a resource to attain organisational outcomes, but we need to acknowledge their functionings and wellbeing at work to sustain the outcomes.

From a Human Resource (HR) point of view, the findings of this study especially the framework could help organisations and HR teams devise their organisational development strategies which could focus on workplace wellbeing and employee engagement. Small firms could understand more how to invest their resources into improving the wellbeing of people at work which in turn would benefit their organisation through success and entrepreneurial sustainability. Additionally, the firms would be better able to understand the kind of people they want to recruit based on the assessment of their organisational capabilities and dynamics and the individuals capabilities and functionings.



### **7.3. Interesting encounters and challenges while conducting this study**

The learning I took from embarking on this PhD journey from 2014 to 2018 was in many ways related to the challenges of researching workplace wellbeing. I attempted to explore the concept of workplace wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations by engaging with academic and practitioner conceptualisations and narratives. At the very beginning of my journey, I was lucky enough to have a detailed discussion with Sir Cary Cooper, who is one of the eminent academics in the field of organisational psychology and has done extensive work in the arena of wellbeing (see Cooper, 2018; 2010; 2013; Cooper and Dewe, 2008). He shared his views of wellbeing at work and gave me some valuable insights which stuck with me during this study. His insights and discussions confirmed my idea of exploring small or medium scale companies since not much has been done in this size of organisation in terms of mental health and wellbeing. I had several such interesting discussions and encounters with academics such as Dr. Chris Tanner, Prof. Alan Barrell and other academics in the field of entrepreneurship and management, which helped me not only to gain insights into the topic but also made me aware of the possible challenges of research workplace wellbeing. These conversations enabled me to discover the ideas and ideologies that lie behind different perceptions of wellbeing and different ways to enable positive wellbeing at work. My understanding was also strengthened when I wrote and presented papers at various international conferences (International Council for Small Business (ICSB), The Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE), International Entrepreneurship Forum (IEF), RENT and symposiums (University of Southern Denmark Doctoral Symposium), where my topic on wellbeing at work within small entrepreneurial organisations attracted positive feedback and some suggestions that could improve my study. These forums acted as a platform for me to recruit one of my case study organisations and they were extremely motivated

to take part in my study considering they desired to give wellbeing significant importance.

Research is not always clearly delineated, as enquiries generate new questions that require further investigation if one wishes to understand a complex phenomenon such as wellbeing. Furthermore, studies do not always turn out as planned nor do single studies provide the complete insight aimed for. I faced several challenges during these four years of my study. Initially I received apprehensive comments from several colleagues and academics, questioning my bold move on conducting empirical research on a sensitive issue such as workplace wellbeing. The remarks I received were mainly doubting my ability to find organisations willing to participate in a study where their employees would be asked questions about wellbeing. However, I was stirred by these comments and I used my personal contacts and some academic contacts to find suitable organisations that were willing to participate in my study.

The real challenge began when I started conducting my interviews. Below is one of the excerpts from my research diary which will help understand my impressions while conducting interviews. I wrote this when I was waiting for a participant to sit down for an interview with me.

*“It was a challenge conducting interviews at the (Case study II). First, I had to interview employees during their work hours, so it was unlike other normal desk jobs, since this is a different kind of job where you need to serve the customer all the time and be customer facing - it gets difficult to get their undivided attention and time. Second, the whole atmosphere is very casual, and I feel like they would not really take things seriously (about the topic of wellbeing). With some employees it was difficult to gain access because they kept shutting*

*me down every time, I asked them for an interview date and time. I would not be able to point out the reason per se, but I got the impression that they were having some personal wellbeing issues, so for them this topic was too sensitive to talk about. One of the employees did give a similar impression about this employee. So, I could corroborate this”.*

I was extremely mindful about the participants and their personal circumstances while conducting my study. Thus, I kept reassuring and seeking the participants' approval at regular intervals to check whether it was fine to continue with the interview. On a few occasions, I had participants becoming emotional and oversharing about the wellbeing related issues they were facing both professionally and personally. I experienced discomfort and was challenged as a novice researcher, but I developed the skills to be able to handle such emotional situations with the utmost compassion and maturity. I learnt how to promote dignity and respect by maintaining confidentiality and integrity and valuing the individual's experience and emotions. I also learnt how to be flexible and show empathy in such difficult situations. These incidents and individual perceptions about wellbeing at work helped me understand more about the lay descriptions of workplace wellbeing because they opened up and described their wellbeing experiences using various instances that were personal to them. These conceptualisations further helped in building a stronger conceptual base for interpreting wellbeing experiences and the various facets at work that affect the wellbeing of individuals in small firms.

#### **7.4. Limitations of the study and future research agenda**

The statements made in the discussion of the results are reflections based on explorative rather than inferential research. Qualitative case studies provide us with depth in any study but leave us with difficulties for replication given the uniqueness of individual cases (Queirós et al., 2017; Noble and Smith, 2015; Leung, 2015). However, I believe that the richness of the findings together with the ensuing, final set of propositions provides good material for detailed examination of firms in both qualitative and quantitative studies. The depth of difference and detail should also suggest a more in-depth qualitative study with a greater number of case studies in different contexts. Even a comparative study between firms to provide new insights into a topic of substantial significance for organisations and people in different countries could be a future research agenda.

The study has a small sample size (Robinson, 2014; Opong, 2013) in addition to being limited to small entrepreneurial organisations, which could be a limitation. Time constraints were also a limitation, wherein I was unable to spend more quality time with the participants. However, I feel that it would have been difficult to keep the interviewees' attention for such a long span (more than one hour). Additionally, I think a longitudinal study in order to understand the developmental pattern and trends over time could help future researchers. However, this was not possible in my case for two reasons; one being that the access to these companies was limited and it was extremely difficult to gain access (Myers, 2013) over a longer period of time, and the second being that there is very little research on employee wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations, and therefore I had to start from understanding the employees' perceptions of wellbeing and the factors that impact their wellbeing in such organisations.

The location (at their workplace) where each interview was conducted might have influenced the participants' responses. Nevertheless, I tried to make the participant comfortable and reassured them on several occasions that their responses would be confidential and that no one would be able to trace anything back to them. I believe this did not hinder the process of my study as the participants were open and comfortable talking to me about their wellbeing experiences at work.

Interviewees may lack the exact terms for the describing their wellbeing experiences, but that did not imply their lack of understanding of the concept. Initially, I saw this as a limitation but soon I adapted the formulation of the probe questions to fit the comfort level and background of the participants. Trust was an important factor in this study, as the participants had to trust that I would represent their views honestly and transparently (Ponelis, 2015; Opong, 2013; Barbour and Schostak, 2005). The interpretation of the participants' responses and the conclusions drawn from the results might have been influenced by the researcher's own subjective feelings or bias. To mitigate this limitation, I was extremely mindful and reflexive about not letting my subjective feelings or preconceived notions affect the study.

## **7.5. Conclusion**

This thesis began as an exploration of the wellbeing experiences of individuals working in small entrepreneurial organisations. It developed into an investigation of gathering a deep understanding of how individuals experience wellbeing in fast-paced, innovative small entrepreneurial firms in the UK. In doing so, this thesis highlighted how factors such as relational assets, ownership, the creative process and organisational policies and procedures within small entrepreneurial organisations

have a bearing on how individuals experience wellbeing in such firms. Amartya Sen's capabilities approach helps us explore and understand how individuals experience wellbeing in small entrepreneurial firms. This theoretical approach gives us the freedom to explain wellbeing as a phenomenon within an evaluative space (small entrepreneurial firm) where there are organisational and individual capabilities. Individuals have the freedom to choose from the various functionings and achieved positive wellbeing experiences. This thesis enables us to start giving importance to the people aspect of entrepreneurship by using three distinct but comparable case studies to give us a better understanding of employee wellbeing in small entrepreneurial organisations, therefore making a critical contribution to the entrepreneurship and workplace wellbeing literature.

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## Appendix 1: Synopsis

### **Workplace Well-being: A PhD Research Project**

Neha Gopinath

*PhD Researcher*

*Essex Business School*

#### **Introduction**

My doctoral research is an investigation of the relationship between organisational culture and workplace wellbeing in entrepreneurial organisations.

By ***entrepreneurial organisations*** I refer to those organisations that are innovation-driven, people-oriented and value generators. They encourage creativity, generate new products, processes or services continually, seek continuous improvement and optimum resource mobilisation, and are able to adapt and shape their organisations to achieve such ends.

***Workplace wellbeing*** is vital to 'human' and 'social and relationship' capital, which are described as employees' capabilities, competencies, experience, and motivations to innovate or be creative; and networks of relationships that aid information and knowledge sharing among stakeholders.

My work aims to obtain insights into the link between entrepreneurial outcomes and wellbeing, especially the mental health of employees. This relationship has attracted the attention of leading corporates, policy makers and researchers recently, not least because of the potentially corrosive effect of stress and other wellbeing factors on organisational development, sustaining innovative capability, increased productivity and growth.

I attach a schedule (*see Appendix below*) showing some of the most significant pronouncements made in the press and in research.

#### **My Research Proposition**

My essential proposition is that entrepreneurial organisations are better able to improve performance by understanding what augments and hampers workplace wellbeing in order to have sustainable innovative growth in a highly productive environment. To help develop this proposition, I will be carrying out in-depth qualitative research. To this end I seek your assistance with the development of case studies.

#### **Case Study Participation and Data Collection**

Respondents/participants within your organisation represent one micro case study within a larger research project. In order to create a comprehensive understanding of organisational culture and workplace wellbeing, participants are recruited from diverse entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial organisations. Data collected within your organisation will form part of this data set, allowing me to draw wider conclusions. My study will collect qualitative data from a selection of voluntary participants via semi-structured interviews. Ideally, I would like to conduct interviews with a minimum of 10 respondents working at various levels in different departments, but within a small organisation this would mean interviewing all the employees (even if there are fewer than 10 participants).

### **Work Plan:**

- For a small organisation – all employees (full and part-time) including the entrepreneur/CEO or any other top management employees would be requested to participate in the study.
- Each interview would take approximately one hour.
- The study can be completed within the span of 1 – 2 days considering the number of the respondents.
- Schedule for study is flexible depending on the organisation.
- Access to relevant documents such as annual booklets, mission, vision statement, EAP information, HR policies, etc. would be required.

### **My Research Co-ordinates**

As a PhD Researcher I am based at Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK. My doctoral supervisors are Professor Jay Mitra, Professor of Business Enterprise and Innovation at the Essex Business School and Dr. Danielle Tucker, Lecturer at the Essex Business School.

For more information please contact me on [ngopin@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ngopin@essex.ac.uk) or +44 7901773150.

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**Appendix 1:**  
**Recent Commentary on the Importance of Organisational Well-Being**

“Overall, two-fifths of respondents (578 organizations) report that stress-related absence in their organisation has increased over the past year, although this rises to half of public sector organisations. Larger organisations, across all sectors, are also more likely to report stress-related absence has increased. Very few report that stress-related absence has decreased.”

- CIPD Report (Miller, J 2015)


“Workplace stress is the leading cause of sickness absent in UK.” - Sir. Cary Cooper (CfSocialScience, 2014)

“I didn't realize until recently the impact of wellbeing on outcomes such as productivity and life expectancy - and even the stability of nations. The importance of wellbeing goes way beyond employees now, it has an impact on citizens too, everywhere”.

- Jim Clifton CEO of Gallup (Virgin Disruptors, 2015)



“Despite business leaders recognising the importance of addressing mental health at work there is still a long way to go to break down the wall of silence and create genuine change.”

 - Patrick Watt, Corporate Director, Bupa (Odell, 2014)

“New and exciting innovations and technologies have come along to shape our approach to employee wellbeing, but our attitude has always remained the same – it's our people who drive our success, so we strive to maintain a healthy and happy culture, and create environments in which everyone can flourish.”

- Sir. Richard Branson Founder of Virgin Group (Virgin Disruptors, 2015)



“Dennis Stevenson, former chairman of HBOS Bank and Pearson, owner of the Financial Times, suffers from depression..... this followed high-profile cases including that of Sir Hector Sants, former head of financial regulator who stepped down from Barclays after announcing he was taking leave because of “exhaustion and stress”. Antonio Horta-Osorio, chief executive of Lloyds banking group, took leave two years ago on doctors' advice.”

- The Financial Times (Groom, B 2014)

“Bankers on the verge of a nervous breakdown.” – The Financial Times (Plimmer G, 2015)

“Lots of people work in the City because it is competitive, but the intensification of work and the threat of job losses intensify stress at any level.”



- Peter Rodgers, Chairman of City Mental Health Alliance and partner at KPMG. (Plimmer G, 2014)

“A UK government report in 2014 calculated 70m days a year are lost due to stress, depression and other mental health conditions.”

- The Financial Times (Plimmer G, 2015)



## Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Introduction: (First, I will introduce myself and ask for their introduction as well)

- Could you share with me a bit about your background and how you came to be in your current job role? OR Can you briefly tell me about your current role?

Activity before conducting the interview:

- Could you take *one* picture from your mobile phones/tablet of anything (person, place or thing) in your organization that resembles or showcases the culture of your organization and bring this along to the interview.

(Back-up plan) In case someone does not get a picture along with them, I would ask them to describe the organisational culture in their own words

(This will enable them to narrate their story about why they clicked or selected this particular picture and how they perceive the organisational culture.)

- Can you describe why you selected this picture?
- What does it represent to you?
- Why did you choose to work in this organization?
- How do you feel about your work?
- When did you feel the most happiest and content at work? (Follow up with a Why? If they donot talk about it)
- Have you ever felt unhappy or stressed at work?
- Could you share an example of a time when you found work difficult or stressful?
  - A time when you felt under pressure at work? (to check if they were stressed at any point because of their job demands)
- How did you deal with that?
  - Did you seek help?

- From whom – organization (superiors)/ colleagues/ family/ friends/ professional help (doctor)?
- Did you have any reservations about seeking help?
- Did you find it helpful?
  - What happened after that incident?
  - Has it occurred more than once?
- Do you feel like coming to work every day? (Follow up with a Why? If they donot talk about it)
- Do you feel your colleagues/superiors are stressed out, depressed or anxious at work? (Ask this question only if they say they say everything is fine with them; for me to get more respondents)

Activity at the interview (half-way into the interview):

- Could you explain well-being in your terms?
- Give them a choice of words (written on pluck-cards) and ask them the following;
  - Which amongst these words are important to your personal wellbeing?
  - Why is this important?
  - Does this prevail in your organisation?

Words/Phrases:

- Implementation of new ideas/concepts
- Capability of creating unusual products/services/processes
- Focus on Training & Development
- Open Communication
- Knowledge sharing
- Competitive work atmosphere
- Enthusiastic Workplace

- Self-Motivated Work environment
- Continuous Improvements
- We grab “Opportunities” and make the most of them
- We are ‘Proactive’ at work
- Freedom to grow
- Freedom to fail
- I am allowed to my own decisions at work
- Unrealistic deadlines at work
- I have a good work-life balance
- I have resources to be innovative at work
- I am happy at work
- My organization cares about me

Conclusion:

- Where do you see yourself in the next couple of years? OR What does success look like for you?
- Do you feel enthusiastic about your future in this company?

*Note: The question could change as per the respondent’s answer to why they chose that particular word/phrases.*

### Appendix 3: Participant Information sheet and consent form

25th September 2016

#### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

The background of the study and who will be conducting this study?

This study is an investigation of the relationship between organisational culture and workplace well-being in entrepreneurial organisations. By entrepreneurial organisations the researcher refers to those organisations which are innovation driven, people oriented and value generators. They encourage creativity, generate new products, process or services continually, seek continuous improvement and optimum resource mobilisation, and are able to adapt and shape their organisations to achieve such ends. This study will be conducted by Miss. Neha Gopinath, PhD Researcher at the University of Essex, UK.

What is the purpose of this study?

Workplace wellbeing is vital to 'human' and 'social and relationship' capital, which are described as employees' capabilities, competencies, experience, and motivations to innovate or be creative; and networks of relationships that aid information and knowledge sharing among stakeholders. This study aims to obtain insights into the link between entrepreneurial outcomes and well-being, especially the mental health of employees. This relationship has attracted the attention of leading corporates, policy makers and researchers recently, not least because of the potentially corrosive effect on organisational development, sustaining innovative capability, increased productivity and growth.

What would taking part in this research involve?

You as a respondents/participant would represent one micro case study within a larger research project. In order to create a comprehensive understanding of organisational culture and workplace well-being, several participants are recruited from diverse entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial organisations. Data provided from data collection within your organisation will form part of this data set which will allow the researcher to draw wider conclusions. The researcher will collect qualitative data from a selection of voluntary participants via semi-structured interviews. For the study the

researcher would be conducting in-depth interviews with the participants at their workplace which would last up to one hour.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary without coercion. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any given time. The choices that are made or the information you share will have no bearing on your job or on any work-related evaluations or reports. You will be given this information sheet and would be asked to sign an individual consent form before starting the interview. These interviews would be conducted on one-to-one basis (researcher and the participant) at their workplace in a meeting room / closed cubical to maintain confidentiality.

What if I take part in this study? Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Any personal information (i.e. name or contact details) of you or your organisation will be anonymised and protected. The information that you provide is anonymous and kept private. The information will be stored using study numbers on a password-protected computer within a locked office at Essex Business School. The researcher will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team.

What will happen to the results of this research study?

Nothing that the individual participant expresses in the interview will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to them by their name. The overall results and knowledge that the researcher gets from this research will be shared with you and your organisation before it is used in the doctoral thesis. This information would be generic and in no means will it be identifiable to you or your organisation.

What happens if something goes wrong?

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence and if you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have

been treated during the course of this study then you should immediately inform the research team (details below). If you are not satisfied with the response, you may contact the research director of Essex Business School, Professor Martyna Sliwa, or University's Research Governance and Planning Manager who will advise you further.

What happens next?

The researcher will contact you by e-mail or telephone to arrange a date and a suitable location to take part in an interview. Please keep this information sheet for your information; should you agree to participate in the research you will also be given a copy of the signed Informed Consent form for your records. The researcher would like to take the opportunity of thanking you for reading this information sheet. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions to the researcher prior to signing the consent form at the time of the interview.

Researcher: Miss. Neha Gopinath

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### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Please complete the whole of this sheet after reading the information sheet	Initial	Please Circle one
1. I have read and understood the information sheet dated 25th September 2016. Please keep a copy for your reference.		YES/NO
2. I have had an opportunity to discuss this study and ask any questions.		YES/NO
3. I have had satisfactory answers to all of my questions.		YES/NO
4. I have received enough information about the study.		YES/NO
5. I understand that interviews will be audio-recorded.		YES/NO
6. I understand that details of my participation up to the time of withdrawal will be stored anonymously on file and may be used in the final analysis of data.		YES/NO
7. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, without my employment contract or legal rights being affected.		YES/NO
8. I understand that sections of any of my study notes may be looked at by responsible individuals from Essex Business School or from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to access my records that are relevant to this research.		YES/NO
9. I understand that an anonymised version of my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. However, any specific information which might identify me or my organisation will be excluded.		YES/NO
10. I have had sufficient time to come to my decision.		YES/NO
11. I agree to participate in this study.		YES/NO

#### PARTICIPANT

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Name (BLOCK LETTERS): .....

I have explained the study to the above participant and they have indicated their willingness to take part.

#### RESEARCHER

Signed: ..... Date: ..... Name: NEHA GOPINATH

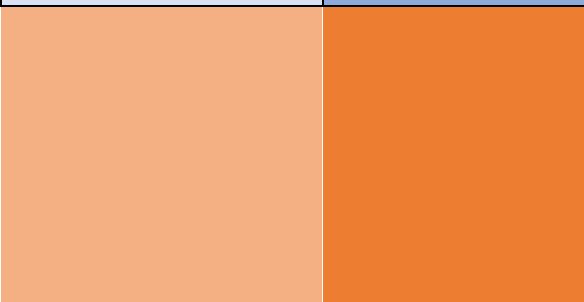
## Appendix 4: Data Structure (Case Study I)

Quotes	1st Order Codes	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Themes
<i>Lily: "where Luis (entrepreneur)... has kind of given me that empowerment... freedom that is really useful and I feel like I own my work... he believes in my ability which makes me be more creative about finding unique ways to do new things and to do things differently...."</i>	Freedom at work	Ownership/Entitlement	<b>The People</b>
<i>Dave: "We have the support of our team all the time. It is more like an "us" feeling than "me or you" we all share the success and failure together. This motivates me to contribute more to our projects like I blurt out an idea even if I think it's weird. I know they will guide me through it."</i>	We all share success and failure together		
<i>Alex: "they gave me the flexibility to choose the hours I work and that helps me to manage my personal life, I needed that kind of flexibility..."</i>	We have flexibility at work		
<i>Sonya: " We have the flexibility to do our work our way but at the end of the day we need to record our work and the number of hours we spent on each thing.. This stresses me out completely because then I don't feel I can spend much time on brainstorming or researching. that restricts my flexibility."</i>			
<i>Sonya: "Customers come first. Here it's more about the client and their needs than ours. We as a company are always in search of new projects for which we all strive hard."</i>	We are always in search of new projects		
<i>Sonya: "But the more people we became more paper was produced and there was no point where someone said ok stop we need to actually de-clutter everything now before we start hiring new people and even when we did we tried that a few times but there was so much of paperwork that no one really knew what it was or what it meant or whether that was important and so it was just kind of left."</i>	No one takes the responsibility		
<i>Inky: "We are all one big family-like...but that has its negatives... That's basically where no one takes the responsibility of things...they just expect others to do it."</i>			



<p>Alex: "... he is like a child who is in his imaginary world with his imaginary things, they want to do and it's all over here and all over there and it's just a mess all over the place."</p>	<p>He is a Passionate Entrepreneur (also incl. personality traits)</p>	<p>The Entrepreneur</p>	
<p>Lily: "Luis (entrepreneur) is like the centre of the office and he is always the one who can make everyone very stressed. As a CEO he is very. He loves to micro-manage and he loves to he loves to delegate the same things to different people because he needs to get stuff done."</p>			
<p>Sonya: "Once Luis (entrepreneur) gave me a job to do but he wasn't so clear about when he wanted it done...he went to Natalie and gave her the same job within a few hours...made me feel little, as if I wasn't capable."</p>	<p>Communication and Transparency with the entrepreneur</p>		
<p>Inky: "Luis(entrepreneur) is vegan so we are not allowed to bring meat in this office...he didn't even ask us our opinion...it was a decision pushed down on us...which is so opposite...we all take decisions together"</p>	<p>He (entrepreneur) is a great leader but he is not so good at managing things</p>		
<p>Sonya: "Luis is a great leader but he is not so good at management. For me it's the other way around that I am probably more focused on the management and the day to day stuff setting clear goals and targets rather than like having that kind of motivational inspirational leadership style".</p>	<p>We can talk to him (entrepreneur) anytime we want</p>		
<p>Sonya: "So I do but he (entrepreneur) has been good and... when I can come up to him at any time and then he will take me outside and I can tell him whatever I need to and he will try to give me some advice which is which is u know advice from a professional perspective."</p>	<p>Work-based relationships</p>	<p>Relational Assets</p>	
<p>Alex: "...the team are close team not that they spend a lot of time together outside the work, but they are very used to each other, they are able to manage each other and have a really good way of working with each other."</p>			
<p>Sonya: "when a client shares their feedback and books more training modules, it's a kind of a high which is overwhelming. It motivates us to do better. We have a close relationship with all of them"</p>	<p>We have a close relationship with our clients</p>		

<p><i>Inky: " I feel my manager is willing to teach me and push me to do better after recognising my skills and ability to do a work..."</i></p>	<p>Role of Managers/Managerial Support</p>		
<p><i>Katrina: ".....there is encouragement and there is even an expectation from people to do so but there is may be not as much as leadership in that sense of showing how you can do that or guidance on how to do that."</i></p>			
<p><i>Alex: "I chose to take the job because seemed like a really good environment and really nice people really fun people and it's got a family kind of feel to it...we have been able to discuss them whether or not I kind of get my opinion across or not and whether they actually come to anything we are still allowed to discuss it and I think there is a lot can be said for that. And when you have an issue with someone you can tell, and it is like a family. You do fight and argue but you know it comes from a good place...we are more engaged because of it, I guess."</i></p>	<p>One big family</p>		
<p><i>Luis: "We are trying to help people in the society to cope with mental health issues and wellbeing issues. We want everyone to function effectively and to the best of their ability. We provide support, we have a duty of care and safe guarding responsibility towards the society."</i></p>	<p>Building Social/cultural capital</p>		
<p><i>Dave: "I can handle him (an employee with mental health issues) very well and I tell others who get stressed because of him and come to me seeking advice, 'make the stones blow out' and that comes with age, that comes with experience and that comes with perspective."</i></p>	<p>Handling Wellbeing issues at work / Coping Mechanisms</p>		
<p><i>Sonya: "Monday was the first day in the new office and on Sunday I was really looking forward to coming to work because we have a bigger space now, I hadn't had that feeling for a long time to be honest and I was really excited about coming to work because we have the new office. In the old office there was no space for anything because we had to share with the other organisation. That's why new office more space and no restrictions made me really excited and happy to come to work."</i></p>	<p>Space (Physical and mental)</p>	<p>Objective paradigms</p>	<p><b>The Creative Process</b></p>



<p>Patricia: "I have always been the last-minute person, so I work most creatively and effectively in the best when I have short time and I just need to get it out. Otherwise I just over think things I just think about it too much."</p>	<p>Time</p>		
<p>Sonya: "I would like us to be have more time for that creative space that allows us to be proactive and to create modules and training programs and that where we don't have to wait until people need it, but we just put it out there. I think that's what I would wish for."</p>			
<p>Sonya: "I thought up to now that I do need Luis (entrepreneur) approval because I am still sometimes involved in the sales and consulting companies so there every time I feel like I need to ask him but now just a couple of weeks/months ago, we really got to a point where he is like every time you come to me and ask me permission to do something I always say yes there is never been situation where I disagreed with your decision so just do it. So, he has kind of given me that empowerment. So that was really useful and encouraging. That's something I am trying to pass on to others and tell people what's stopping you just do it. This is because I know that brings out the best in you. That gives you confidence to try new things and new ways and new ideas..."</p>	<p>I feel empowered here</p>		
<p>Sonya: "I was getting drawn other roles...that's not what I was hired for. I don't have the expertise to do that... just frustrates me and gets me all stressed and worried."</p>	<p>I have clear roles and tasks</p>		
<p>Sonya: "When I have clear goals and tasks, I just feel like I can mentor others better...so I try and get clarity from my manager. Quite a lot like people come to me to ask how they should do certain things and I can kind of based on my experience I can help them I feel valued I feel knowledgeable and experienced and I feel that I am getting more confident in making decisions making my own decisions and I now am telling lot of people to do so as well."</p>			
<p>Lily: "So at the moment I am quite excited because we have a couple of really big projects which make me excited and which I have been working on in which I can dig my teeth into which is what I love."</p>	<p>Nature and Intensity of work</p>		

<p><i>Katrina: "I think having more structured times to work on different things would be good. I would be more productive then but then also to have that time for guidance..."</i></p>				
<p><i>Dave: "...the passion and mission here is the duty of care and that is the why and how we identify the most with the organisation. We want to do good for the society. Having a common goal, we feel like one family."</i></p>	<p>Our Shared values/vision</p>			
<p><i>Alex: "we don't have a business plan or vision or a mission statement... we have a code of conduct statement which is what we follow here but that's not enough according to me because some feel like it's a rule and some treat it like the have the liberty to do what they feel is right... this makes it different values for different people in here..."</i></p>				
<p><i>Sonya: "... I think our company is probably the best environment to do that kind of thing (new creative things). Because everyone can pretty much what they want. We create new training modules and unique wellbeing strategies for our clients day in and day out."</i></p>		<p>We create new and unique products and services</p>		
<p><i>Lily: "when you do have a great idea we do have lots great ideas then we have to discuss it with Luis (entrepreneur)... he often shoots me down... it is like some spilt personality..."</i></p>	<p>Appreciation/Recognition at work</p>	<p>Perceptions/Emotions</p>		
<p><i>Dave: "No it's the appreciation what my job role is within the team, it's not extremely stressful but they don't understand what I do and that disturbs me. Eight hours of what I do in the field is not the same as one does in the office..."</i></p>				
<p><i>Katrina: "I am allowed to make mistakes but there are certain mistakes I can't afford to make because that will affect my job. My manger once intervened and punished me for making mistake. But then he left soon so I didn't bother anymore because I became more careful and conscious about my work. I stopped taking risks and did only what was right as per the book."</i></p>	<p>I am allowed to make mistakes</p>			
<p><i>Sonya: "I feel that this is the kind of divide that we sometimes have as a company that we don't always practise what we preach... we get to the point...where we</i></p>	<p>Emotional Demands at work</p>			

<p><i>notice that we have become too much of a caveman joe (stressed out) and then we need to talk with the team and get back into the more professional side of things but it's always this kind of balance that we are struggling to keep".</i></p>			
<p><i>Alex: "Our code of conduct is how we work how we operate and so not having any of the polices in place, I thought ok that's refreshing but at the same time I am thinking oh we kind of do need process and policy around certain things."</i></p>	<p>Explicit Routines</p>	<p>Formal Structures at work</p>	<p><b>Organisational Policies, procedures and structure</b></p>
<p><i>Dave: "I absolutely know for a fact that it stresses the other people out. Of course, it does. I think conflicting priorities or not knowing what their priorities are or what their boundaries are..what they're supposed to be doing because that can change like that, it really can."</i></p>			
<p><i>Alex: "...my personality is very laid back and approachable and that's exactly what they wanted in their team but I wasn't so experienced for the job they hired me to do.." (Employee left the company within six months of joining)</i></p>	<p>Person-company fit</p>		
<p><i>Dave: "...as a team we are close.... we are very used to each other, we motivate each other to challenge ourselves, we are able to manage each other and have a really good way of working with each other."</i></p>	<p>Highly driven teams</p>		
<p><i>Alex: "... that might be my age and I am well into my 40s and through my working career I feel I have earned the right to have a good work-life balance. So that's really really important to me and I even more so because of the commute and the other things.. I think I do have work-life balance here, but its about you know kind of...I am still probably adapting and embedding in to a different kind of working that I am used to.. So I have to got to make it work from me as well as making sure that Luis (entrepreneur) is happy with the role and the work I am doing. So its obviously got to work both ways. "</i></p>	<p>Work-life balance</p>		
<p><i>Dave: "I love challenges at work. So, if something changes or improves I happily accept and moreover it I adapt very quickly so it doesn't matter...I think it's important for us...you know...or how will we make new things?"</i></p>	<p>Continuous Improvements at</p>		

<p><i>Inky: "I remember when my line manager left the job, there was a vacancy and I was promoted because I was the next in line but that completely stressed me out because I wasn't ready for that challenge. I didn't have the skills or the experience required for this job... I was depressed and I wasn't able to do my job.. I kept making mistakes...eventually I was demoted which shattered my morale and it took me a while to get back on track..."</i></p>	<p>work/ Resistance to Change</p>		
<p><i>Dave: "...don't tie me down with the nuts and bolts of where have you been and how long has it taken you? So, jog on alright. There is got to be a bit discretion here say the way I see it is if I am not being rewarded financially which I am not then there is got to be a rewarding me freedom."</i></p>	<p>Implicit expectations</p>		
<p><i>Sonya: "I have started learning to code and all that kind of stuff which is truthfully very basic, but I am learning new stuff which I love. I am better at what I do, and I also teach others how to do it."</i></p>			
<p><i>Dave: "I think whenever you start anything new here and I am pretty new here been here 18 months kind of new... so whenever you start anything new you have a rapid progression you learn a lot you feel like you are learning a lot and taking a lot on and then suppose you plateau or maybe that is a perception or may be when you look back six months ago oh I have not learnt anything new. I suppose it's about knowing how to deal with those perceived plateaus."</i></p>	<p>Training, Learning &amp; Development</p>	<p>Informal Structures at work</p>	
<p><i>Dave: "what we actually teach here is personal resilience. It's your responsibility...you feel like you're getting caught up in anything stressful, well that's your choice, to get caught up in the drama and get worried about it..."</i></p>	<p>Personal Resilience</p>		

## Appendix 5: Data Structure (Case Study II)

Quotes	1st Order Codes	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Themes
<i>Randolph: "I would say everyone who works behind the bar brings a bit of personality trait. Every day that someone works there's a different perspective of how we can sell, how we can provide joy to the customer and how we can do things more differently than others. Danny (entrepreneur) lets us have that freedom."</i>	I have freedom at work (autonomy at work)	Ownership/Entitlement	<b>The People</b>
<i>Randolph: "Just one day one of my friends suggested I came here because was looking for work and I just stayed because it's a very comfortable place for me. It's very flexible"</i>	We can do our work our way (flexibility at work)		
<i>Sasha: "I get to choose my own shifts and Danny (entrepreneur) is quite understanding...he lets us do whatever we want at work...he doesn't have an agenda as such...we can do our work our way...that's rare to see outside."</i>			
<i>Randolph: "So in a way it's important to me because they give me a chance, they allow me to meet so many people here with whom I collaborate with... I write poetry and it allowed me to meet ...writers, a lot more social occasions in which I can engage more...."</i>	This place is an extension of yourself a bit (bringing your own personal identity to work)		
<i>Tate: "We have opportunities all the time, basically. When we had the mulled cider on the bar. The festival we're going to have, little bits of artwork here and there. So, it's yeah, it's an extension of yourself a bit."</i>			
<i>Elena: "Yeah exactly, like I said it's really relaxed which means I can set my own shifts and I have a lot of input into the business, like I wrote the menus and I made the signs and stuff and yeah, so I have I get to have influence but I t also means that sometimes I have to clean up their messes for them. I do these odd jobs by my own nobody really cares here but I know how important it is to do these kinds of jobs too."</i>	Opportunistic and proactive at work		

<p><i>Danny: "I saw this opportunity. So we bought the place next door. I can already see how it's going to improve my business. We want to get this place started soon."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "it needs to be managed properly. I don't know, the guys, nobody bottles up, so we have all of this really expensive beer and nobody puts it in the fridge they will just leave it up there, no one really takes the onus to do it and I'm embarrassed if someone asks for a beer, if I have to say, I am sorry I haven't got any that's cold."</i></p>	<p>No one really takes the onus here</p>		
<p><i>Danny: "I've been doing this about 30 yrs. The interest in beer goes many many years back, the teenage years. How you make so many different types of beers out of just 4 ingredients. The sort of alchemy. How do you get all the different flavours and profiles and characteristics?"</i></p>	<p>Passionate Entrepreneur (also incl. personality traits)</p>	<p>The Entrepreneur</p>	
<p><i>Sasha: " Danny (entrepreneur) his passion for brewing beers is amazing to see that passion, the way he talks about it and he is totally into it. We can make out how much work he puts into making these beers and he brews it himself...he loves what he does. He shares all of that with us and we feel the passion and we know a lot more about the beers we sell, that's good too."</i></p>			
<p><i>Rachel: "There's no way of knowing what kind of money Danny(entrepreneur) and Donna (his wife) make but that's not really the question, the question is that the projected image is that they don't make enough and that influences everything. They are not open about it with their own employees."</i></p>	<p>Communication and Transparency with the entrepreneur</p>		
<p><i>Donna: "It's very stressful sometimes very stressful. You keep telling they guys you need to follow these processes and some people are good and they do it but other people who have been working since the time we opened, and they still don't do it and I said to them I don't want to be begging you and tell you why don't you record the money? How do I know how much money was made? You rang everything, but I don't have the total. This brings me to the stuff from the beginning and the constant checking. Oh, I forgot. I said how can you forget to write the total, so it's something like that and sometimes they forget to record things of importance. Sometimes if we have received some deliveries they don't tell us. The deliveries will be left at the back and people are coming and we lose like full crates of beer. It's a lot of money so it's a big responsibility. I am texting them we have a delivery today,</i></p>			



<p><i>the glass man is coming, can you please be there, can you please be there and open the door because can't be there. I have bills to pay I have a mortgage and everything, but no one responds."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "sometimes I have to clean up their messes for them. Danny (entrepreneur) hasn't run a bar before, ever and he's a brewer and he's been one for 30 yrs. and that's his thing. That's his focus and he's doing a good job of this place, that sounds so sceptical. But he'll be the first person to admit that he isn't a bar manager and actually when he hired me he said you probably know more about this industry than I do because all he does is make the beer. So sometimes there are things that need organised that don't get done if I don't do them. He is not a good manager at all."</i></p>	<p>He (entrepreneur) is not a good manager at all (entrepreneur's managerial defects)</p>		
<p><i>Harvey:"...it would probably be good to have a manager. Because they're not managers. They've not run a bar before. The manager we had before had run a bar for a very long time he was just personally a mess, but he was relatively good at the job. So, you need someone like that because he knows everything whether it's the laws or how to handle a situation...because even if I told Danny (entrepreneur) or his wife they wouldn't do anything very effectively because they don't know how or they're not around anyway. Danny won't probably show up this entire shift and his wife might, but she won't do anything."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "Danny (entrepreneur) is very approachable, like one time when Sasha had some personal problems, he helped her out and he even cuts her some slack. But Donna (his wife) doesn't like that."</i></p>	<p>He (entrepreneur) is very approachable</p>		
<p><i>Rachel:" Danny (entrepreneur) and his wife have some issues. I think it's because they both want to run this place differently. Donna wants more rules and she wants to control things around here which Danny doesn't agree to. He wants it to be a free space and he wants everyone to do what they want. So, there is clash and that affects the employees. For instance, they don't take Donna and her rules seriously because Danny doesn't support her in front of the employees."</i></p>	<p>Dynamics between the owners/entrepreneur-wife</p>		
<p><i>Donna: "Danny (entrepreneur) doesn't support or trust me much when it comes to choosing between me and his employees. Once we had this bad customer, he was</i></p>			

<p><i>drunk, and he had some issues with me I think, he was going out and calling Danny and saying I was screaming and shouting at him. I had to prove it to Danny using the video tape that nothing had happened because he didn't believe me over the customer."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "Danny's (entrepreneur) a bit, he's very forgiving so (an employee) does stuff like. I hate it when they leave takeaway, sometimes they stay till 4am after a shift and I come in on a Sunday and they've left half eaten takeaway boxes over there. And I really hate that because it stinks and it's really disrespectful but that's kind of what it's like. Everyone's just so relaxed and nobody cares. Most of us here don't have to speak to each or like each other much because we all work different shifts. I am happy about that actually."</i></p>	<p>Work-based relationships</p>		
<p><i>Elena: "Danny's (entrepreneur) is very forgiving so (another employee) does stuff like... oh! I hate it when they leave takeaway, sometimes they stay till 4am after a shift and I come in on a Sunday and they've left half eaten takeaway boxes over there. And I really hate that because it stinks and it's really disrespectful but that's kind of what it's like. Everyone's just so relaxed and nobody cares."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: " sometimes the customers mention it to me, they say oh, he (entrepreneur) really needs you... the customers notice a lot more than we think."</i></p>	<p>We have an amazing relationship with our customers / consultants</p>	<p>Relational Assets</p>	
<p><i>Rachel: " First of all I wouldn't define myself as this consultant. I'd define myself as an extension of the team. I don't think I'm an employee, I work side by side with Danny (entrepreneur). Simply because I'm not employed by him. The work I do, it's quite random. It's related to PR but I keep having the feeling that I get dragged into the dynamics which I don't like and I try my best to steer away from it. But I have to admit that there's a huge pull to get me involved in the dynamics."</i></p>			
<p><i>Tate: "We have an amazing relationship with our customers. We talk for long hours. They are like a part of us...they can play to music they love, drink the beer they love and it's like a party every day."</i></p>			
<p><i>Rachel: "I want to support them, something I want to do, I want to see that place grow but I think that monetarily there might be issues there that need to be</i></p>			

<p><i>resolved. I think he right now takes my help for granted and we haven't had the conversation about my fees for the work I am doing for them or my time."</i></p>			
<p><i>Randolph: "Serve the customer, take the money. This is the idea here as well but also to engage with the customer. Communicate with them. If they come along from time to time, daily, you establish a sort of a relationship with them. What music they like, what beer they like, who they are. It's a personal bar. Sometimes you need to be professional but there is that connection between a customer and the bartender with every person working here, they provide something that stays with the customers, stays with the bartender. Of course, we provide Belgian beers and stuff like that, they're a bit crazier. It makes the personalization to some extent more intimate. The customers can ask to play music they like they can play themselves on the vinyl they can enjoy the diversity of tastes. So I think there's a bit more diversity than other pubs in town."</i></p>	<p>Experience and knowledge sharing</p>		
<p><i>Elena: "I am fairly experienced in hospitality and stuff so that helps.. Danny (entrepreneur) hired me because of that I guess.. Since he doesn't have any experience, I am the one who plays an important role here.. He asks me a lot of stuff before doing it.. for instance, I got the beer menus because I was like, people were buying the same 3 things and we have 50 bottles. it made no sense so I wrote them in like, designed them and laminated them and handed them out and Danny (entrepreneur) was kind of like, Oh! we're selling more bottles. Hand slams on table and I was like Yeah, how is this an unexpected result? What are you on? Sometimes I think, it feels a bit like herding cats, like running a nursery."</i></p>	<p>Building social capital through networks and personal ties</p>		
<p><i>Elena: "I think that was nice that it made me really happy to come here when it was somewhere where I felt like other people say, 'oh it's great!!' whenever anyone asks me where I work and I say (organisation's name) and I love it! Oh, my goodness!' So that makes me really happy to work here. It's got a really good reputation. It's endearing."</i></p>			
<p><i>Randolph: " (organisation) has given me new friends, I even started working with this guy who came in as a customer...we both love poetry and we meet here. He</i></p>			

<p><i>then brought in his friends and it just keeps building this way...I love that about here."</i></p>			
<p><i>Rachel: "I help them connect with people who could do something about the new space they have bought. I have a good network here in Colchester and I share that with Danny, but he is not professional about these things. He won't turn up for meetings with these people etc. He is very casual so sometimes people don't like working with him..."</i></p>			
<p><i>Danny (entrepreneur): "..... being a proper part of the community and a bit of a hub for things, for events ...I said you're more than welcome to come and do something on the stage here... we've had cabaret here.... we've had proper rock bands here, we get singer...It is about bringing everyone together."</i></p>			
<p><i>Donna: "We want the community to use this space for all purposes. Music, art everything. We have given our space to budding artists and we want them to come here."</i></p>			
<p><i>Tate: "I can practically do what I like and make decisions at work and that makes me feel good. Danny, he doesn't mind the way we do things here."</i></p>	<p>Empowerment</p>	<p>Objective paradigms</p>	<p><b>The Creative Process</b></p>
<p><i>Sasha:" Danny (entrepreneur) believes in me and he pushes me to reach my best, that's not something I have experienced any place else. It's just here..he makes you feel that you have that power and authority where you can makes decisions and feel totally in control."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "I get really frustrated when people do not care about the work I have put it to make these changes at work. I was given this chance by Danny (entrepreneur) and he agrees with me about my ideas, but I do not find enough support to make it happen. This just is waste of my time and I feel like there is no team spirit among us. It's like I have the authority, but I don't have it..."</i></p>			
<p><i>Elena: "There's a lot of sexism and harassment in, especially in the pub industry. And sometimes, I feel a little bit like Danny(entrepreneur), doesn't do the best job of standing up for us, or kind of supporting us with that and that's the most upsetting thig just because it makes me feel I am not valued."</i></p>	<p>Nature and Intensity of work</p>		

<p>Harvey: "This is a tedious job, you need to stand all the time and serve different kinds of people. I was once harassed by this customer and he was passing very provocative comments, but I just kept quiet...I think it's because he was drunk. But these are the challenges we face here because of the kind of business we are in."</p>			
<p>Tate: "Danny (entrepreneur) said he wanted this to be a place where gigs and misfits can be happy, and I think some of us here wouldn't fit into a mainstream bureaucratic office...he lets (another employee) DJ and (another employee) recite his poetry...he wants them to be happy and they get this amazing place to do this..."</p>	<p>Our shared values/vision</p>		
<p>Randolph: "We all have the same likings - beers, music, conversations, gigs.. We all want to serve the customer in the best possible way. We share Danny's passion for freshly brewed unique beers and that's why we are able to share that we with our customers."</p>			
<p>Donna: "it's quite hard to run because there's a lot of competition but it think that the product that we offer, the beer that Danny offers is quite different to other pubs so that can be one good point in our side. And we want to make this place for the use of the community it can be like two points"</p>			
<p>Elena: "We serve different beers all the time, Danny (entrepreneur) spends a long time brewing and experimenting with his beers. That's what is unique about us... We serve new things. The vibe and service here is so different from other pubs in Colchester."</p>	<p>New venture creation / new products and services / unique products</p>		
<p>Danny: "We bought the café next door, we plan to serve some food there, so we are getting that sorted now. We want to keep on doing new things."</p>			
<p>Elena: "I do so much at work which I was not hired for..like odd jobs.. Painting the wall, repairing some stuff, making the menu list like I said before, but I don't get appreciate by anyone. I think Danny (entrepreneur) notices it and he says its good but that's about it."</p>	<p>Appreciation/Recognition at work</p>	<p>Perceptions/Emotions</p>	
<p>Randolph: "I think Danny (entrepreneur) gives a lot of chances, he is very patient, so he allows you to make mistakes but its not good to repeat them personally I feel that way. But yeah, he is chill with things."</p>	<p>He (entrepreneur) allows you to make mistakes</p>		

<i>Elena: "I would really like to have a place on my own someday because I don't think this place has a nice balance."</i>	Personal goals and passion		
<i>Harvey: "I am here because I love music and here I can play my music... Also, I wanted a break from my studies, so personally I am here for all this."</i>			
<i>Sasha: "I was slapped by a lady customer the other day...I don't know why she did that, but I think in this kind of job we need to be strong and we shouldn't get affected by such incidents. But I think it's not just females but even men face the same things from some customers."</i>	Emotional Demands at work		
<i>Donna: "It's very stressful sometimes very stressful. You keep telling they guys you need to follow these processes and some people are good and they do it but other people who have been working since the time we opened, and they still don't do it and I said to them I don't want to be begging you and tell you why don't you record the money? How do I know how much money was made? You rang everything, but I don't have the total. This brings me to the stuff from the beginning and the constant checking. Oh, I forgot. I said how can you forget to write the total so it's something like that and sometimes they forget to record things of importance. So, we have some deliveries they don't tell us. The deliveries were left at the back and people is coming and you lose like full crates of beer. It's a lot of money so it's a big responsibility."</i>	Explicit Routines	Formal Structures at work	<b>Organisational Policies, procedures and structure</b>
<i>Elena: "We don't have any protocols here, in a way that's what this place is all about but we do need some protocols in place. Here everything's just a bit slap dash, I don't want to complain too much."</i>			
<i>Tate: "I think we all are here because we want a break from our main stream jobs or studies and we want to enjoy and earn at the same time. Danny (entrepreneur) doesn't really care what kind of person you are when he hires you he just wants you to be good at your job."</i>			
<i>Donna: "We are learning because we don't have much experience in this and like I said to him. Sometimes when things go wrong. How can we balance because we</i>	Person-company fit		

<i>don't have experience and we need help from people that know and have experience in this type of business, so we hire that kind of people too"</i>			
<i>Harvey: "For me coming here is what balances my hectic study schedule. I think most of us here are doing something other than working here so coming here pouring drinks listening to music and enjoying with your customers is how we keep our sanity."</i>	Work-life balance		
<i>Elena: "...it would be good if there were protocols for lots of things.... like I said filling the fridge up, even if there were certain steps, we cannot compel everyone to follow them because that is more like a routine job which not everyone likes to do."</i>	Continuous Improvements at work/ Resistance to Change		
<i>Donna: "Danny (entrepreneur) doesn't want to change anything here.. He doesn't understand that we need to have some policies and we need to follow some rules here.. He thinks giving everyone freedom is the best way to do things.. But we are facing issues now and he just doesn't care I feel.. he thinks I am trying to dominate and take charge.."</i>			
<i>Rachel: "I think if the BH (organisation) was to consider taking this step, this is a very complex thing to answer because they are working at the moment as this phenomenal cultural space and if they were to take that away and make themselves a formal bar or pub it would lose a lot, it would lose the charm, the personable quality but then if they do want to do that they have to do it the right way. You can't just make rules for the employees and not give them the understanding of their rights. The two things can't be separated."</i>	Implicit expectations	Informal Structures at work	
<i>Sasha: "I am new to this so I am happy to learn...Elena (another employee) teaches me stuff and I then add my take it to it and that's how I get through my work. Its amazing feeling for me because I am learning new things and I am getting really good at this job it's like a kick start for my career...I think I will be doing this for a long time. I love it."</i>	We encourage learning and training		
<i>Elena: "no one really cares, as long as it stays open and they have a job they're like fine and I am kind of the same, the most imp thing to me is a place to work and</i>	Personal Reasons		

<p><i>make money and also, I love this so it's nice if I work all week on my writing and my degree you come here and you just let off steam."</i></p>			
<p><i>Randolph: "I don't experience happiness that much but...I would say the most enjoyable is when it's the busiest because then I don't rely much on time, I don't rely much on what needs to be done, you just do under instance. So say there's the happiest when you just constantly serve, you work, sometimes you're silent, you just stand, you do something, stand, do something, stand, do something, stand. It's quite trying because myself I always need the rush, a bit of a Russian heritage."</i></p>			



## Appendix 6: Data Structure (Case Study III)

Quotes	1st Order Codes	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Themes
<p><i>Sam: "I think everybody needs to be allowed to make their own decisions within their sphere of competence but yes, I feel that that's quite important because I would, I feel more motivated when I am allowed to make my own decision and I would rather stand and fall on my own decisions. I would rather know I made my own decision, even if it went wrong with what I knew at the time than having it forced on me. Yes, I think that that's quite important, it's quite important to feel responsible for, to be able to make your own decisions and be responsible. I do get to make quite a lot of decisions here. I think occasionally there have been things I have not been happy with and because of commercial reasons we have had to. I think that generally, I am allowed to make my own decisions and don't feel completely overridden."</i></p>	<p>I am allowed to make my own decisions at work</p>	<p>Ownership/Entitlement</p>	<p><b>The People</b></p>
<p><i>Andy: "fairly flexible to work for, the culture is usually fairly relaxed, fairly informal that's seen as a positive... We are not watched upon or times as in other large companies. We are simply expected to finish our work on time that's all how we do it is on us."</i></p>	<p>Flexibility at work</p>		
<p><i>Joey:" my personality determines my wellbeing because I am calm and composed all the time. I be myself while at work so that's enough for me to progress and get things done"</i></p>	<p>I am allowed to bring my hobbies to work</p>		
<p><i>Mindy: "I can get through my work quite quickly and I'm quite good at giving other people jobs as well. I do hand a lot of jobs out"</i></p>			
<p><i>Nigel:"I always have my headphones on and my manager is ok with it because he knows I get my work done on time. It's like I am allowed to bring my hobbies to work. I love listening to music that keeps me happy."</i></p>			

<p>Riya: "I will say being proactive at work because the culture here is like last minute things then rushing it then everything will just go wrong, so I think being proactive at work is something I always wanted to do things and thinking like one month ahead and taking the opportunity to be ready for anything. I force my team to be proactive, you can't think last minute. But with the service I still need to make this thing work but with the other areas, I am making it work."</p>	<p>Being opportunistic and proactive at work</p>		
<p>Janet: "definitely, there is no restriction. I set up my ideas, I pitch my ideas, they support me and then I implement them"</p>			
<p>Riya: "Communications, not taking ownership, I think these two were the major issues. We have these existing instruments that were developed like 7-8 years back and because they were not being properly managed they were released from R&amp;D to production, they were rushed and because of that we are seeing those issues still."</p>	<p>We have a blaming culture here</p>		
<p>Mindy:" can say it's still there is ownership issues, people here are still kind of into a blaming culture, putting things on others' shoulders. It's improved since I joined but there's still a lack of people not taking ownership. If someone's done something just forget it, find a solution, and fix it. Ok so that sort of culture is still lacking, and I always try to make sure that please try taking ownership, let it be and let's find a solution"</p>			
<p>Nigel: "It's a small company, it's because it's a family owned company they (entrepreneur and his wife) are going to do things their way. The don't have to answer to shareholders or anyone like that. So, they are going to do things their way. I am not going to say it's impossible to influence, them. But at the end of the day they're going to do things their way and that's probably common for small family firms."</p>	<p>Passionate Entrepreneur (also incl. personality traits)</p>	<p>The Entrepreneur</p>	
<p>Piper: "Larry is an entrepreneur and he wants to keep inventing new things and I am like a doer and I just want to get things done. In the bigger picture, I feel we do not have the balance right we have too much entrepreneur and not enough day to day business and it's never been right. I hope we can get more balance"</p>			

<p><i>Sam: "I think less than a month ago I saw him (entrepreneur) talking to people and said why are you talking to people in the lab? And he said, oh, they're coming to me with this and that and I said, if they come to you, just send them to me, just shut that door to communication. He said oh that's fine with me but then a month later you realise you were back to where you were. So, you just have to work with what it is. As I said, it's very, very hard to get a new culture in permanently."</i></p>	<p>Communication and Transparency within the firm</p>		
<p><i>Mindy: "Larry takes up new things all the time and he wants people to follow a particular way of doing things but when they don't do it that way, he does it himself. He doesn't confront that person or corrects him, Larry simply takes up that job. This is not what a good manager should do. He needs to delegate and get things done, not do it himself."</i></p>	<p>Entrepreneur's managerial defects</p>		
<p><i>Sam: "Harry (non-executive director &amp; HR head) was showing me emails that were going back to David, he works for me, from the lab that were going to him from Larry (entrepreneur). So, I have been cut out of that loop because I have been busy with other things as well. This makes it very hard when you have that direct line of communication from the board of directors (entrepreneurs) to the people who are working for me it just makes it very hard to manage because I don't know exactly what they are told, why he wants to keep that channel of communications open all the time."</i></p>	<p>He (entrepreneur) is very approachable and reachable</p>		
<p><i>Monica: "Yes yes, they (entrepreneur and his wife) are very approachable and reachable, although they sometimes work remotely from Denmark, so they are approachable via Skype, WhatsApp so we have got our laptop set up so you see... and everyone has their skypes, their ids so they are fully approachable."</i></p>			

<p><i>Martin: "Generally, what happens is that we go about the day booking in things that we weren't able to book in the next day, packing customer's orders that we were told to pack and generally it's a feel of right, let's get this job done and then all of a sudden it's get another job done and 9 times of 10 we are running around packing orders that don't; leave the building for another two weeks. I think his happens because the office (upstairs) gets the orders out so it looks good on the books, but they don't take into consideration how much space we have downstairs so in a business sense it's smart to make sure they have all these customer's orders but in a warehouse sense with the space we have it's sometimes not the right thing to do."</i></p>	<p>Work-based relationships</p>	<p>Relational Assets</p>	
<p><i>Joey: "generally everyone up here I view as an acquaintance. They're people I know I get on with them, I don't try to get angry or show that I am upset with them if they've upset me or stuff but there are times when I'd turn around and I'd be a bit of an asshole but it's generally because they've done something to annoy me after I would mentioned, can you try not to do this because it stresses me out. So, majority of the people on the top floor I view as work colleagues. Not really friends, they're just here, we all work in the same company, just try to get along. Whereas there are a few individuals that I say are friends, I have a laugh with them, I joke with them, they're nice, I can get along with them. But the majority of people on the bottom floor so the lab, the technicians, the glassblowers, the warehouse, I get on with them, I would still say we're also acquaintances but better acquaintances. I can have a laugh with them I can have a joke with them I mean hell, me and my supervisor are complete opposites of the board. He's a footballer, I hate football, he likes Star Wars I love it, he finds a day out down at the pub absolutely wonderful while I think, oh my God, I would rather be home playing video games. Completely different sides of the board but we can have a laugh. Being brutally honest, because people upstairs think they're better than anyone"</i></p>			
<p><i>Riya: "some people have been here for 6-7 years and they are hogging everything and that stresses me out because they don't let people help them to improve the process, they just feel I've been doing this why is this person interfering? So that</i></p>			

<p><i>through the new org structure we are trying to make sure that you have to let that go, you are not good in that, in the last 7 years you have been R&amp;D find the problem but not the solution. So, the new person will be finding the solution. So, the hogging things also stresses me out. Being here, people feel oh yes, I am the boss kind of thing so how can that new person be taking over do this."</i></p>			
<p><i>Sam: "I think it's a big problem in business if any individual has any more than one person to report to. I think anyone needs only one person to report to. If you're reporting to more than one person, it's inefficient, some people can be devious, it wasn't the case in this one. It just opens you up to all sorts of problems and also it confuses in the mind.... the thing is it's; only going to go one way because if they're reporting to me and to Larry (entrepreneur), they're going to see Larry as the important one because he's running the...so you know, inevitably, someone in my position get undermined, it's bound to happen. That's the negative of it. Positive, I am doing a lot of things here so maybe sometimes it's done with the thought to help me, but it doesn't really"</i></p>	<p>Role of Managers/ Managerial Support</p>		
<p><i>Riya: "we are trying to implement in a different way we have the middle management and we are introducing that, and those people are actually committing to that because it's the managers who are actually not complying to it so how can I expect the team members of the managers are not complying so first we are asking them to commit to this and no incompilance should be seen on this. They are still responsible to communicate to their team members. So again, the commitment and you have to take responsibility for all these things"</i></p>			
<p><i>Monica: "But for the people working for m I try to be bit of a shield for that. I think it's my job to shield them from undue pressure and give them a sensible workload and then I come back to (entrepreneur) and sort of pushback but again that's another reason why we need to keep the management structure respected. Because if that doesn't work to say that we can't do that it's got to wait until next week and he goes to the person beneath me then that doesn't work... you need to be careful about that."</i></p>			

<p><i>Martin: "Sharing knowledge is something that is what I look for personally. Always tell everyone else what you know in the company and what needs to be done which is more said for some other people in the company because sometimes, one big problem in the company is communication because if everyone shared, a knowledge sharing kind of aspect, I think things would go lot more smoothly. People here do not want to share their knowledge at all. They feel threatened and insecure."</i></p>	<p>Experience and knowledge sharing</p>		
<p><i>Piper: "There is a major problem here, people who have the expertise are not willing to share their knowledge. They guard it like their own life. I think they feel like people will use their knowledge if they share it with us. Once when I asked this manager to explain a certain technical mechanism to me he was reluctant and suddenly when Larry (entrepreneur) asked him, he was more than happy to share. I think he feels like everyone else wants to steal his knowledge. That's a bad attitude and we need to change that here."</i></p>			
<p><i>Janice: "I give people time, I don't fight or get angry. I don't take or give stress"</i></p>	<p>Handling Wellbeing at work / Coping Mechanisms</p>		
<p><i>Riya: "In an SME like this, one person is doing multiple things so there are issues and there are gaps which need to be filled and those are not being addressed. So, giving me the role of business dev manager is not just redefining the business strategy, implementing the QMS or making sure that it's being properly done or followed through; it's also about taking care of the production, what is going out/in, the sales and marketing, taking care of the R&amp;D side, what they are delivering to the production team so that actually intrigued me to join because I've not been restricted just to define the strategy here."</i></p>	<p>Nature and Intensity of work</p>	<p>Objective paradigms</p>	<p><b>The Creative Process</b></p>
<p><i>Piper: "Unfortunately, Larry (entrepreneur) has the ability to make people commit beyond their ability whereas the perfect leader in my view is the one who has to ability to make people commit to their ability and surprise themselves with their ability, but what he does is he continually makes people commit beyond their</i></p>	<p>Unrealistic Deadlines / expectations</p>		

<p><i>ability and they make horrendous mistakes and I think that's key part of our problem. People who are here they all are motivated, loyal and they all want to achieve things but because we are pushing them beyond their ability they get frustrated."</i></p>			
<p><i>Mindy: "As a general thing, we're a bit behind on due dates. It's generally because people aren't given realistic due dates. And also, here just being able to tell people what you can and can't do rather than taking things on and not being able to do for them. Most people here are under unrealistic expectations, you've got to accept that, and you have got to push back for more realistic."</i></p>			
<p><i>Justin: "we design new things to solve the issues...we have the capability of creating products in R&amp;D...I was so lucky to get a job in the area that I stared to really like this skill and I really don't want to go in any other field after doing so much work in this field."</i></p>			
<p><i>Martin: "you design one thing and when you manufacture or make that thing and that becomes reality. That gives you a happiness of sort I can't explain that but that gives you some kind of fulfilment and achievement, a sense of achievement which you can't achieve if you're doing day to day paperwork. And you are doing day to day every single thing and every day is same as previous day. I hate that. I'm doing everyday new things which I am remorseful for people who don't have this kind of opportunity. Every day I'm learning, I am learning new things which is my passion"</i></p>	<p>New venture creation / new products and services / unique products</p>		
<p><i>Riya: "There are so many things to do so it's not every day like you do the same old thing. Every day I just come in and think of what new things I'll be doing today. Some new issues to deal with, some new customer that will be screaming, so always will be something new and so far in the last 2 year I never felt stagnant, monotonous, every day is like a new challenge. Although it's stressful every day is a challenge, so I just feel, it motivates me you know, I just go to work and just start the day."</i></p>			

<p>Ian: "Of course it is fine to fail. But if you make the same mistake every day, it's not ok. 9/10 they do a mistake they say sorry I've learned but if you keep on making the same one then you've got an issue. To be fair the guys are pretty good so there's no challenges. Larry's (entrepreneur) quite good, they'll keep out and they'll been letting us...letting me do it and since they have been letting me do it, it's gone really well."</p>	<p>It's fine to fail</p>	<p>Perceptions/Emotions</p>	
<p>Riya: "I think because the culture I talked about the blaming culture there is no freedom to fail here, people are afraid about committing mistakes. They feel that something bad will happen. It's not just one thing if someone starts getting blamed all the time, Larry (entrepreneur) will think he's not a useful resource and in due time he will start planning to take someone else as a new resource. So, in that case I will start fearing to make even a small mistake, so I will be demotivated"</p>			
<p>Justin: "I want to develop myself much more in terms of different areas, mostly I want to develop myself like, running a business, how I can run a business, management skills. I have technical skills which the skill I lack in my personality is a management, running a business, how to run a business which I am learning at the moment as a project manager which I am managing lots of projects so these skills I want to develop more in myself in 5 years I want to be at least director of a department. That's my personal goal which keeps me motivated and happy."</p>	<p>My personal goals and passion</p>		
<p>Martin: "Yeah that's the picking list. People change the list as they go but they don't go and follow up the change in all of them and get rid of the old ones so there's a lack of process, I definitely have to say there is a lack of process"</p>	<p>Explicit Routines</p>	<p>Formal Structures at work</p>	<p><b>Organisational Policies, procedures and structure</b></p>
<p>Janice: "again because of the chaotic nature and with Larry and Piper are back in Denmark a lot of the time you don't tend to have regular meetings and you are constantly under the pressure to get something done, there's always something urgent. We don't really have the culture of meetings here"</p>			
<p>Sam: "health and safety is an area that got a bit forgotten and it's something that I can contribute to. So, they're the big immediate goals."</p>	<p>Health &amp; Safety issues</p>		



<p><i>Martin: "There are a few health and safety issues but they have been brought up but sadly you asked me this question when we are having major acid spill recently and the acid spill still hasn't been sorted and they have cleaned it up and stuff like that but the chemical is in the concrete and the fumes are coming through it and because of that, it's been going on for about 3 weeks now, because of that , we have had to keep the warehouse shutter door open every day to let fresh air in to filter out the chemicals because it's not safe for us to be in there if the fumes are there...There was a process that was followed through but sadly, the end part of that process hasn't been followed up, I think but at the end of the day I am leaving it to H&amp;S to sort it out and if they ask me to do things that have me go anywhere near that I am turning around and saying no because that's not safe. I am keeping my best interest in saying no. As I said, if you would asked me any other month, any other month I'd have said no, it's absolutely fine but at the moment the environment of the warehouse is very much cold. I have to wear a coat and gloves to make sure I am not freezing."</i></p>			
<p><i>Justin:" would like to have a future in this company, I want to stay as long as I live, I want to work for this company if there are opportunities to go higher or t reach a higher ladder. I am not the person who is looking back over my shoulder left or right to go to other companies. This is a good company. If it's going to treat me good, I will stay forever"</i></p>			
<p><i>Martin: "if you would asked me a month ago, I would have happily said I am staying but recently because of this acid this, I would probably say that it's very much down to what happens, what opportunities come up....at the moment we work in one of the smallest warehouses in this industrial estate, it's a two-man warehouse. It's a good starting point but it doesn't look like it's going to expand, like it's going to take on more staff because we are not very busy, we are not a very busy warehouse. But if I ever got an opportunity when I am driving in a big professional warehouse, I would definitely take that because that is an experience at the end of the day and that would help my experience in warehousing at the end of the day, so I would say it's more a 50-50 whether I stay or go."</i></p>	<p>Future of the company</p>		

<p><i>David: "To be honest the future of the company is down to its managers. I am not enthusiastic about the future of the company, I do as I am told. If the company goes into recession, then it goes into recession. If the company all of a sudden gets busier and moves, I move with the company. I am only enthusiastic for the company only when it needs me to be. Any other day I am not enthusiastic. I am here for the long run. If the company goes down, it goes down. I am just here for the company, I come in every day and I work"</i></p>			
<p><i>Ian: "Honestly, I've got a really good work-life balance. We have a lot of give and take where they let me come and go as I please, but they know I still do the work and the hours by the end of the month. So, if I fancy going and play golf on a Monday morning I don't have to call in and pretend I'm sick. I can call in and say I'm going to play golf in the morning, not many companies do that. But they know for a fact that I'd stay until 8-9 in the evening the next day or the day after that to do the work. There's no line, there's no pulling sick days if I fancy an emergency holiday, it's fine, so yeah, it's open, not many companies do that. Last time I worked for a company you got toilet brakes, you got timed."</i></p>	<p>Work-life balance</p>		
<p><i>David: "Because I have quite a good life outside life outside of work and I say enjoy my work and I have a good life out of it too. So, it's important I enjoy my work so for eg. 6-8 every day I enjoy my time at home and because I enjoy my time at home I enjoy my time at work and because I enjoy my time at work I enjoy the things I do and then when I get home, I enjoy my life"</i></p>			
<p><i>Sam: "It has really, it's very hard to change that culture. It's very hard to get the people up above to stick to the management structure because if they don't get the right answer, what they consider to be the right answer, they go to the people directly below you and they hassle them and it's very very hard to change that culture here"</i></p>	<p>Continuous Improvements at work/ Resistance to Change</p>		
<p><i>Riya: "They just don't want to change. They feel like it's irrelevant. If they don't do it, no one is going to fire them, no one is going to say anything because they know they are here for the last 3 years and have enough experience and knowledge. The company won't fire them and get someone else because there will be another 12-</i></p>			

<p><i>month cycle to learn to get to that level. So, small companies are reluctant, they don't really want the person who has got so much experience to leave unless a very exceptional case"</i></p>			
<p><i>Riya: "since I am doing so many things at the same time if I get the opportunity of learning something more in that because I know Larry (entrepreneur) helps me all the time to understand but also helping me to learn and do things on my own so I really like the way he used to give things to me so first he starts helping me, so I start learning. So, there is no formal training like you see in the large companies. I have been thrown into that role and actually working in that role, you start learning so he is like that and the he would just leave me and do it on my own and with any problems I face he helps me out. I think that opportunity to get to do that is good"</i></p>	<p>Training, Learning &amp; Development</p>	<p>Informal Structures at work</p>	
<p><i>Joey: "Reason I am choosing to stay here is because they give a very large option for qualifications. I'm currently waiting for my results in NVQ in warehousing. Once I get that it shows that I am fully qualified to work in any warehouse in the country, so it was a good opportunity that they (the organisation) gave me and one I get my results I plan on doing my next level which is warehouse supervisor. The company allowed me to boost my own knowledge of how a warehouse should work and be and that's what makes me happy"</i></p>			
<p><i>Nigel: "Well, in this company, I mean, small to medium sized you won't be able to get lots of training or opportunities. If you have to develop, either you have to develop by yourself or networking. The project I'm running some are more experienced than me, some are juniors, just say beginners of whatever skills they're working on. The one way is to work with and experienced person and that's through networking and this company is offering me that opportunity. And I am leaning from them, so this is one way I'm developing myself. Another way is to actually company, encourage you or give you opportunity to go and learn new skills in terms of like, some short courses which I would like to go on but the expenses and all these expenses which I want the company to pay because at the end whatever skill I will develop will be used for the company. There is a lack he of opportunity which the company doesn't see that way to actually develop an</i></p>			

<p><i>employee's skills in terms of investing in them so the investment in the employee is less"</i></p>			
<p><i>David: "I like the people, we get on well, it's down the road from me, it's only a 20-minute drive. The management side I do because they need me to do it. If Larry(entrepreneur), I have someone else to do what you're doing management side i would be like brilliant. I don't want to do it. I'm not that motivated to do that role. I'm good at I do, and I know that's valuable anywhere. I don't need this. My life would be a lot easier if I did have it. They don't pay me any extra money for doing it. You see people that get stressed out at what they do. I don't need to get stressed out because my work is quite easy"</i></p>	<p>Personal Reasons</p>		
<p><i>Andy:" I joined here because I live close by and this is the only place where I could see myself working because I wanted to learn a new technical skill like glassblowing and I am getting trained here."</i></p>			

