

Inclusive Outcomes for Social Entrepreneurs with Intellectual Disabilities: “What Happens
When They Act”

Abstract

Social entrepreneurship is a growing trend, reflecting a shift in contemporary policy towards entrepreneurship as viable employment option for people with intellectual disabilities (ID). Entrepreneurship is intended to promote autonomy, reduce dependence on entitlement-based services, and reduce employment disparities while stimulating business and job creation. It is not well understood what this means for people with ID involved in social entrepreneurship. Dyadic interviews were conducted with people with ID participating in social entrepreneurship (n=7) as well as their key support person (n=7). Interviews focused on understanding outcomes in social entrepreneurship for people with ID, or “what happens when they act.” In particular, this article explores perceptions of profit/self-sufficiency, growth, and social innovation to challenge how outcomes have been traditionally assessed.

Keywords: employment, entrepreneurship, outcomes, qualitative, self-sufficiency, growth, innovation

Introduction

For almost two decades, we have known that traditional outcomes in disability employment do not accurately reflect entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (Blanck, Sandler, Schmeling, & Schartz, 2000; Parker Harris, Renko, & Caldwell, 2013). Yet, we continue to struggle with identifying quantifiable outcomes for evaluating disability-entrepreneurship policy, programs, and practices. The purpose of this interdisciplinary research is to explore what outcomes mean for social entrepreneurs with intellectual disability (ID) through in-depth dyadic interviews. This research builds upon a synthesis of disability studies and entrepreneurship studies (Parker Harris, Caldwell, & Renko, 2014) to incorporate ID scholarship, an intersection that has not been previously explored in empirical research (Caldwell, Parker Harris, & Renko, 2012).

The meaning of “outcomes” in disability employment differs substantially from that found in entrepreneurship. Whereas disability employment focuses on financial self-sufficiency and independence, entrepreneurship focuses on profit, innovation, and growth (Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014). It therefore becomes essential to understand what the meanings of these concepts are for people with ID participating in social entrepreneurship in order to interpret the outcomes that result. The use of a qualitative approach allows for exploratory findings that come directly from individuals with ID actively participating in social entrepreneurship. This information can be used to inform the development of outcome measures moving forward to challenge how outcomes are traditionally assessed in disability employment and entrepreneurship policy.

The purpose of this article is to explore how people with ID are participating and supported in social entrepreneurship, and the outcomes of their ventures. Specifically, this

research focuses on: (1) what are the outcomes people with ID identify as important in their social entrepreneurship; and (2) how do people with ID perceive and recognize success in their social enterprise ventures? This article reports findings from a qualitative study that uses dyadic interviews with seven individuals with ID and their support persons. The goal of this research is to offer new insights and information for practitioners, policymakers, and other professionals committed to the full inclusion of people with ID that will inform the expectations we set for entrepreneurship as a sustainable employment option, from the perspective of social entrepreneurs with ID themselves.

Background

As a discipline, entrepreneurship exists at the intersection of economic theory, the social sciences, managerial and organizational science (Swedberg, 2000); not only accounting for the rich and diverse nature of its development thus far, but also resulting in a fragmented focus (Low & MacMillan, 2007; Schildt, Zahra, & Sillanpää, 2006; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The three main foci of entrepreneurship research echo these disciplinary divisions: motivation: *why they act*, management: *how they act*, and outcomes: *what happens when they act* (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Stevenson & Jarillo, 2007). In exploring the central research question of how people with ID are participating and supported in social entrepreneurship, this research was structured around the three foci above. This structure was chosen because not only are these questions at the core of entrepreneurship research, but also because they can be used to break down complex concepts into concrete, easily understandable, and accessible plain language sub-questions. The findings presented in this article focus on unpacking the third component: *understanding what happens when they act: how people with ID are participating*

and supported in social entrepreneurial outcomes. Findings on motivation and management will be published separately due to the depth of information.

Operationalizing Social Entrepreneurship

Within disability employment research the terms self-employment, entrepreneurship, and microenterprise are often used interchangeably (Yamamoto, Unruh, & Bullis, 2011). However, within business literature they are distinct concepts. Their conflation therefore presents problems in the development of effective disability policy, programs, and practices (see Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014 for detail). Self-employment refers to a customized employment strategy, intended to provide a job to employ that individual as an alternative to salaried employment. The goal is for that individual to become financially self-sufficient. Entrepreneurship differs in that its goal is not job creation for one individual, but the creation of a profit- and growth-oriented business that has the potential to employ others in the future. For this reason, entrepreneurship is both an employment strategy and an anti-poverty strategy (Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014).

Social entrepreneurship is distinct in that it refers to a business that is intended to create both a monetary profit as well as address a social mission (Parker Harris et al., 2013; Parker Harris, Renko, & Caldwell, 2014). Social entrepreneurs are motivated by experience with a social problem or unmet need encountered in their community (Shaw & Carter, 2007; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009); the same is true for social entrepreneurs with ID (Caldwell, Parker Harris, & Renko, under review-b). It is this social mission of the business that plays a key role in distinguishing between it and commercial entrepreneurship. While a commercial business may be socially responsible, for a social enterprise the social mission must be central to the business (Austin et al., 2006). As a result, social entrepreneurship should yield the same benefits of commercial entrepreneurship with the addition of generating social value

that benefits the community. However, people with disabilities continue to encounter barriers in social entrepreneurship in three areas: access to education, training, and information; finance, funding, and asset development; and networking and supports (Parker Harris et al., 2013). Barriers experienced by social entrepreneurs with ID appear to mirror those encountered by social entrepreneurs with disabilities in general (Caldwell, Parker Harris, & Renko, under review-a).

Traditional outcome measures used in self-employment research for people with disabilities, as indicators of success, have included sustainability of the business, gross and earned income, provision of appropriate and affordable health benefits, integration and community activities, and reduction of governmental support (Arnold & Seekins, 1994; Blanck et al., 2000). However, many researchers who have tried to tackle the phenomenon of entrepreneurship among people with disabilities have found it difficult to develop meaningful outcome measures as stages of success used in traditional employment activities are limited in their application to self-employment and entrepreneurship (Walls, Dowler, Cordingly, Orslene, & Greer, 2001). Analyses must extend beyond measures of economic growth to include measures of self-determination, quality of life, health, and other outcome factors (Blanck et al., 2000). This becomes further complicated when adding a social value component, which is itself difficult to measure (Austin et al., 2006). Leading us to question what outcomes should be reasonably expected in social entrepreneurship for people with ID.

Outcomes in Disability Employment

Within the broader context of disability employment, successful outcomes refer to individuals who have gained and retained integrated and competitive employment. Accordingly, a variety of variables are used to indicate employment outcomes for people with disabilities

including, *inter alia*: the number of individuals served; the percentage employed; average annual earnings; average weekly work hours; and the percentage with high school diploma/GED (Sulewski, Zalewska, Butterworth, & Migliore, 2013). It is difficult to compose a comprehensive picture of the current state of disability-entrepreneurship in the U.S. because we are not collecting statistics on it. The closest approximation of statistics reflecting the entrepreneurial environment for people with disabilities must be cobbled together from sources that address the issue peripherally (Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014).

In 2018, the Current Population Survey found that the national self-employment rate for persons with a disability was 10.6% compared to 6% for the general population without a disability (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). In 2009, an analysis of self-employment outcomes within the federal and state VR system was published (Revell, Smith, & Inge, 2009); serving as a snapshot reflecting self-employment as it exists in the VR service system for the period from 2003 to 2007. In 2007, the percentage of case closures in self-employment nationally was 1.7%. There was a large degree of variation between states, with four states reporting percentages over 5% (Maine, 6.0%; Alaska, 6.6%; Wyoming, 7.9%; and Mississippi, 12.6%). This sizeable variation is indicative of differences between states in the services and support available (Revell et al., 2009). A recent analysis of outcomes for this same time period delves into further depth; identifying gender, ethnicity, cost of VR services, education attainment, and public supports as predictors of successful closure in self-employment (Yamamoto & Alverson, 2013). However, this data still provides very little information about social entrepreneurs with ID, many of whom research indicates may be operating outside of the VR system because it is not fully meeting their needs (Caldwell et al., under review-a).

Disability employment outcome measures as they pertain to entrepreneurship do not appear to fully reflect entrepreneurship in practice – lacking ecological validity and speaking instead to a fragmented system of employment services (Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014). While case closure in self-employment can perhaps be an effective measure for determining successful entry, research has found that, when it comes to social entrepreneurship, it stops short of capturing the full picture (Parker Harris et al., 2013). Entry is only one aspect of entrepreneurship, beyond which lies firm growth as well as financial and operational success (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986). It is important to support people in thinking beyond merely establishing a business, to thinking of the business in terms of growth and innovation. To truly consider the issue of disability employment from a perspective of social entrepreneurship we need to reassess what outcomes are representative of social entrepreneurship as an ongoing process rather than as simply a static moment.

Outcomes in Entrepreneurship

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Social Entrepreneurship Study, the U.S. has the highest prevalence of early-stage social entrepreneurship activity (Lepoutre, Justo, Terjesen, & Bosma, 2013). Recent advancements in entrepreneurship have undergone an international effort to improve the quality of data and outcomes through the establishment of standardized entrepreneurship indicators, intended to inform policymakers of how the implemented policies affect entrepreneurship and objectives for the economy and society (OECD, 2009). In the case of social entrepreneurship, this necessitates addressing both economic and social outcomes (Austin et al., 2006; Mair & Martí, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009), whereas traditionally there has been a tendency to prioritize economic outcomes over non-economic outcomes (Haugh, 2006). Measures of outcomes in entrepreneurship are utilized to facilitate

management processes. Bridging the priorities of disability employment and social entrepreneurship therefore requires identifying outcomes that will be both useful to social entrepreneurs with ID in managing their business as well as to policymakers and practitioners in determining the appropriate provision of services and supports.

Methods

Dyadic Interviewing is a methodology informed by a disability studies ideology, ensuring in-depth interviews are person-centered and self-determined (see Caldwell, 2014 for more detail). This technique for dyadic interviewing comprises three interviews: one with the person with ID, one with the individual that the person with ID has identified as being a key support to provide supplementary information, and a follow-up interview with the individual with ID. This structure of separate dyadic interviewing allows for comparisons, cross-checking, and triangulation of the data while still maintaining focus of the unit of analysis on the individual with ID (Caldwell, 2014; Eisikovits & Koren, 2010).

Seven dyadic interviews were conducted with individuals with ID participating in social entrepreneurship in the Chicagoland area (n=7), and the person they identified as being most important in supporting their entrepreneurship (i.e. key support person, n=7). Purposive, criterion sampling was used to obtain information-rich cases that meet certain criteria (Patton, 2002), described below. A targeted recruitment strategy was used that began by identifying local employment service providers and asking them to share recruitment materials, dissemination via a state-wide network of developmental disability organizations, and sharing recruitment materials via social media networks.

After the completion of the initial four interviews (Nathan, Derek, Heather, Julie) and their key support persons it became apparent that, due to the paucity of research in this area,

context was lacking for understanding the experiences of social entrepreneurs with ID and how it differs from the experiences of people with ID who are participating in social entrepreneurship, but not *as* social entrepreneurs. Additional recruitment identified three individuals (Andrew, Kimberly, Wayne) working at a local social enterprise that employs people with ID, a greenhouse that has been given the pseudonym of “Budding Futures”, and their key support persons. During data collection, two of the participants with ID working at Budding Futures revealed they were in the beginning stages of starting a business, providing further context for understanding the experiences of people with ID who choose to pursue social entrepreneurship (see Tables 1 & 2). All participants in this research have been assigned pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

[INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Participants self-identified as having mild to moderate ID when contacting the researcher in response to the recruitment materials. Screening identified which of the potential participants met the inclusion criteria for social entrepreneurship in this research: 1) the business was intended to be profit-generating; 2) the business was intended to be growth-oriented; 3) the business had a social mission in addition to a profit-generating one; and 4) the social mission was central to the business. These criteria are the same as that used in a larger associated research project exploring the experiences of social entrepreneurs with disabilities that was not specific to people with ID (Caldwell, Parker Harris, & Renko, 2016; Parker Harris et al., 2013; Parker Harris, Renko, et al., 2014).

The social entrepreneurs with ID were motivated to start their businesses through a combination of both push factors (needs-based due to lack of other options) as well as pull

factors (opportunity-based, pursuing one's interest/passion); this extended to those working in a social enterprise but wanting to start their own business. The individuals working at Budding Futures saw it as temporary and were motivated by a need to earn enough work credits to qualify for social security in the future (Caldwell et al., under review-b). Nathan and Derek both owned fair trade, organic coffee companies, but differed in their approach as one focused on flavorings and the other on ethical sourcing. Heather and Julie both had public speaking as part of their overall business. Heather, in partnership with her mother and key support person, consulted and educated about self-advocacy and inclusion in education. Julie had a jewelry making business that included a paw charm on each creation, the proceeds from which went to support a local service animal organization. The business that Kimberly and Wayne wanted to start was a baked goods start-up that tapped into Kimberley's passion for food and Wayne's desire to manage people (Caldwell et al., under review-b). Each social entrepreneur was principally involved in developing the business idea. While several benefitted from informal supports, only Derek had a paid employee: his cousin and key support person, Charles (Caldwell et al., under review-a).

A semi-structured interview guide was used for each interview, which provided a flexible guideline for asking questions and facilitated in managing information between and among dyads. The interview guide was structured around the three foci necessary for answering the central research question of how people with ID are participating and supported in social entrepreneurship: motivation (why they act), management (how they act), and outcomes (what happens when they act). The findings presented here focus on understanding the outcomes of social entrepreneurship for people with ID. Questions for participants with ID explored what the social enterprise does for others, what it does for them personally, whether they feel they are successful, how they will know when they are successful, and what they think success is for

themselves personally as well as for the social enterprise. The same questions were asked of the key supports, reworded to focus on the person with ID. This led to better understanding outcomes from their perspectives.

Field notes were instrumental in keeping track of information from interview to interview, for cross-checking, and identifying probe questions that would lead to information-rich responses (Caldwell, 2014). In particular, responses from the first interview with individuals with ID were cross-checked with their key support person during the second interview. The key support persons' response as well as the person with ID's response were then member-checked with them during the final interview to look for discrepancies and agreement as important points of information that allow for triangulation of the data. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed before being coded using ATLAS-TI and analyzed thematically.

Findings

In discussions with social entrepreneurs with ID, outcomes were spoken of broadly and were not defined *a priori*. Rather, space was provided in the conversation for participants to contribute suggestions generated from their experience of what happens when they act. Surprisingly, the outcomes revealed paralleled the inclusion criteria for participation in the research and were closely related to the mission of the business. Themes that emerged included discussion of profit and self-sufficiency, growth, innovation and idea generation.

Profit & Self-Sufficiency

The social entrepreneurs with ID participating in this research wanted to make a profit, and articulated reasons explaining why. However, a desire for their business to make a profit did not necessarily coincide with a desire to achieve self-sufficiency. For instance, when Nathan was asked what he wants to see for the future of his business, his response was, "To make a profit

and to take some of the money out of the business for myself.” He explained that he did not expect profit to be an immediate outcome, but rather viewed it as something he hopes to see further “down the road” as indicative of his success. For Nathan, making a profit meant having enough money to continue running the business and eventually having enough money to pay for things that he currently could not afford both for the business and for himself. However, Nathan was clear that he does not want to become self-sufficient:

Nathan: No. I would feel more comfortable having state funds because if the business goes down, I don’t want to support myself completely. It’s easier for me now so I don’t have to worry.

A sense of security is conveyed by reliance upon public benefits, one which should not be taken at face value. Nathan’s statement belies a much deeper problem of financial insecurity. If it were not for mechanisms of formal support systems, he would not have been able to start his business. Yet, his business is not yet self-sustaining and until that point (and perhaps beyond) his livelihood will continue to rely upon public benefits.

For Derek, making a profit would mean being able to do with the business what he wants and to improve aspects of his life, such as someday living on his own or with a friend and learning more about coffee. With regards to the former, it seemed as if Derek is waiting for the business to be more successful before becoming more involved:

Interviewer: Is there anything you would like to change about the business?

Derek: I don’t like to have that power... Somewhere in between the light and the dark is a medium. And then there is espresso and Turkish!

With a bit of levity, Derek explained that he does not really wanted to have *complete* control, as he enjoys working with others and his family in particular. Even though Derek is the figurehead, his business is relational and he makes decisions with his family and other support persons acting as advisors. That said, Derek has a lot of ideas that he is waiting on pursuing, some of which may

be considered less practical or immediate, but which may actually be business activities essential to growth. Meanwhile, Derek's family "team" is focused on meeting the practical, day-to-day needs first and foremost. In other words, once the business makes more of a profit, Derek will have greater entrepreneurial freedom.

When Heather was asked whether she hopes to make a profit she responded, "Yes, that's the goal, we need to get more money. Mainly it will help to go to school." For Heather, as with the other social entrepreneurs with ID, profit is connected to plans for the future and spoken of as a vehicle for self-determination. Julie would like to travel, particularly to India where she could learn more about the jewelry made there. For Julie, however, the central reason for making a profit was so that she could continue working towards achieving her social mission. Overall, profit appeared to have less to do with money than it did with access to opportunities to improve one's quality of life, to improve the quality of products or services, and to help others.

Growth

The social entrepreneurs with ID spoke about ways they wanted to grow their businesses. When asked about where they would like to be in one year and in five years, their responses for the immediate future were more practical than their dreams for the more distant future. Nathan wants to "start small and get my name out in Chicago first" before expanding into a market in a nearby state. For now he is happy working with James (Nathan's key support person) and is looking forward to working in the shared kitchen. However, Nathan would ultimately like to see the business grow "really big" to the point where he can open up a store front and hire employees (with and without disabilities) to help with sales and distribution:

Nathan: If not 5 years, then 10 years, I want to have my own building. Like a big place where I can roast the coffee and after that get myself established... open up a coffee shop and hire employees. Then I can be head boss and come in once in a while to make sure they're doing their jobs and I'd give them good money and good benefits. I would not

give the top people like managers a raise first, I would first give the employees raises. I think its right to do that because I feel my company is for equality and fair trade.

It is fascinating how Nathan's social mission extends to his desire for fair labor practices, speaking to the relationship between his experience in employment and his interest in fair trade.

Derek would also like to expand to a storefront:

Derek: Yeah, I'm getting ready and it might take time, but I'm going to be bringing this out and won't be cooped up in the room... but I will go to a storefront.

Having a physical workplace that is outside of his home would allow Derek to have more interaction with customers, which is the aspect he likes most about working at the farmers' market. Having a storefront would allow him to sell directly to customers year-round, rather than solely when the farmers market is operational. At the moment, Derek is working on expanding the business by approaching a local grocery store chain to see if they will stock and sell his product. When asked about hiring more employees, Derek saw that as part of the business expanding into the future. He would like to hire, and has actually been approached by parents who are trying to find work for a young adult with a disability, but Derek's business does not currently have the capacity for it.

For Julie, desire for growth is also limited by concerns about the capacity to sustain it due to her health and competing demands for time and energy. Julie wants to keep her business local because "It's a lot easier to keep it in one place so it doesn't cause chaos." Although, she would like to expand so as to have her jewelry sold in stores:

Julie:after I make enough jewelry, I can actually sell my jewelry probably in one of the downtown stores and probably the café would work because they have a little jewelry display there.

When asked if she wants to see her business grow she said, "Yes, I want to see how far I can get." The emphasis that Nathan, Derek, and Julie place on having their product sold at a physical

location is interesting. It was spoken of as if that would give their business legitimacy, being included among other products – an allegory for community integration.

Heather's approach to growth for her business is different from the others in that the emphasis is less on hiring employees and more on sustaining partnerships, working cooperatively. In helping other people with ID find their voices and become self-advocates, she would like to see self-advocates start businesses either on their own or working with her social enterprise. Both Heather and Derek were working on actively growing their business, while Nathan and Julie were waiting due to management barriers they were experiencing. However, neither Heather nor Derek had a strategy for growth that would have been provided by a business or marketing plan.

Innovation & Idea Generation

The social entrepreneurs with ID in this research had to have been principally involved in the development of the idea for their business in order to qualify for participation. Accordingly, some of the questions asked during the interview focused on understanding their idea and how it came about and overlaps with motivation as an outcome of both interest and opportunity. For Nathan, Heather, and Julie the idea started as a hobby: something they enjoyed doing, which later became a business when people began offering to pay for it. For Derek, while the idea that he could start a coffee business was generated by his uncle, Derek took ownership of the idea, began learning more about coffee and fair trade, and began developing the business and social mission. Heather had a similar experience in that it was her mother's idea to begin presenting at her IEP meetings, which coincided with her growing interest in public speaking and self-advocacy. For both Heather and Julie, future planning was used as a tool to develop the idea and social mission in line with their goals for the future. Overall, learning more about the subject of

the business and the social issue at the heart of it led the social entrepreneurs with ID to take ownership of the idea.

So what *exactly* makes their social enterprise innovative? For Nathan and Julie, the artisanal nature of their business made it unique. Nathan creates original coffee flavors and Julie creates original jewelry. Additionally, for Julie and Heather, their public speaking businesses are unique because they are sharing their personal stories and experiences. What makes Derek's business distinct is his emphasis on freshness of the product. Yet, it is important to note that what makes the social enterprise unique is not necessarily what makes it innovative. One could argue that the way the participants have organized their business to work with the services and supports available is innovative, but again, this is not necessarily what makes the social enterprise innovative from a business perspective. Rather, it seems the innovative aspect of the social enterprise comes at the intersection of the social mission and meeting a market need. Nathan identified a need for fair trade, organic, flavored coffee in both decaf and regular varieties. Derek identified a need for "better than fair trade," freshly roasted coffee. Heather identified a need for speakers with personal experience in inclusive education and skills in public speaking. Julie identified a need for storytelling and original jewelry that raised awareness about people with disabilities and service animals.

With regards to their innovation in working within the systems and supports available, that is a quality that makes them entrepreneurs. Paired with their interest in taking action via business creation to address social issues, this qualifies the participants with ID as social entrepreneurs.

Outcomes & Key Supports

Comparing the responses of the social entrepreneurs with ID and their key support persons reveals several fascinating points of agreement and disagreement regarding self-sufficiency, profit, growth, innovation, and social mission (Tables 3 and 4). The key support persons all recognized the social mission of the business, although as discussed previously there were some differences in how they perceived it. The key supports also agreed there was innovative potential in the businesses, however, here too there is some incongruity concerning what innovation entails.

[INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

[INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

For the key support persons, the innovative aspect of the business involves the social entrepreneurs' disability. On the one hand, this may be because social entrepreneurship itself is an innovative employment strategy. On the other hand, the key supports make a connection between the social entrepreneurs' ID and the marketability of the product/service:

James: [Nathan's] story is really inspirational and people are really eager when they hear what he's doing to buy his coffee or at least help him out. He tells people what he's doing and creates evangelists just by telling what he's doing. It's really a grassroots effort and people get excited about it.

Charlie: It gives people the opportunity to see another person's story and use [Derek's] as an example to live their own lives. He's come through so much and he doesn't even think of his accident. He's inspirational and inspiring to people and to me definitely.

Mary: People say it's so inspirational and it changed their life, they wanted to try person-centered planning for their students, that kind of stuff... you gave us hope for our child.... This isn't a typical business owning type of thing. [Heather] isn't selling, she's just selling her thoughts and inspiration.

Lisa: For the speaking business, [Julie's] her message inspires people, there's no doubt about that. She's been an inspiration to us since she was adopted.... Now, with all these health issues that come with her type of [physical disability], she's put up with so much and yet the glass is always half full. It's a message of perseverance and hope and it's an inspiration to other people. The jewelry is the same. It comes with a message of inspiration. The people who meet her want her jewelry and something that's she made.

It's like a little piece of her they can take away which is a huge powerful thing. She's here for a reason...

The key support persons acknowledge the social entrepreneurs' skills and talent, yet draw upon overcoming and inspiration narratives to explain why people want to pay for the product/service.

There was a discrepancy among three of the key support persons regarding the extent to which the social entrepreneurs with ID understand what "profit" means:

James: I don't think he's worried about making a lot of money as long as he has his needs met which he does at the moment.

Charlie: I don't think it was for profit. I think it was for satisfaction

Lisa: It doesn't matter to her or us either if we're making money.

During the interviews it was clear that making a profit meant something, even if it did not conform to a conventional definition, and that it was important to participants with ID in achieving their goals. At the most fundamental level Nathan and Derek understood a profit would allow them to keep making ethically-sourced coffee; Heather understood a profit would allow her to keep speaking and working with self-advocates and others towards the goal of inclusive education; and Julie understood a profit would allow her to keep speaking and making jewelry in a way that would help the service animal program. Further, the social entrepreneurs with ID understood that if the business did not make a profit (i.e., enough money) the business would end and they would have to try another, less desirable, strategy for employment where they still might not make enough money to support the lives they want to live. In short, making a profit means being able to keep working. The confusion among key support persons may be due to beliefs regarding skills in managing money and finances rather than an understanding of profit. The social entrepreneurs with ID all expressed the need for support in this area, but one's skill in accounting should not be conflated with their entrepreneurship.

Outcomes & Budding Futures

Kimberly, Andrew, and Wayne were not principally involved in the creation or development of the idea for Budding Futures. Further, it was not their idea to start working there. It was their parents' idea and they agreed it would be a good idea. However, they did not seem to take ownership of the idea, but rather they continued to look for other opportunities more in line with their interests. In addition to being in the start-up stages of a business venture, Kimberly also works at a Goodwill retail store and Wayne has several volunteer positions, working at a grocery store and an office position at a local athletics department. Like Kimberly and Wayne, Andrew also has employment as a janitor at a local community college in addition to his work at Budding Futures. When asked which job they enjoyed more, despite enjoying working there, none of them choose Budding Futures. Their key support persons had difficulty choosing which job their family member with ID enjoyed most, but they were aware that Budding Futures was probably not their favorite. One possible explanation for this is that the participants with ID at Budding Futures are going through a transition stage of their lives where they are exploring their interests and skills as well as the options available.

Income, Profit & Self-Sufficiency. The participants with ID working at Budding Futures differed from the social entrepreneurs with ID in that they all had a goal of becoming self-sufficient and this goal was clearly identified by their key support persons. Their employment at Budding Futures played an important, but limited role in working towards this goal. The job served as a vehicle for earning the work credits they needed and as an important source of income. Once the work credits were obtained, the job became superfluous and employment better matched to their skills and interests was desired. Similar to the social entrepreneurs with ID, becoming "self-sufficient" was spoken of by the participants with ID as a desire for independence and self-determination. Kimberly, Andrew, and Wayne all currently live at home

with their families. Kimberly is hoping to move into her own place and live with friends. Wayne would also like to live on his own someday, but it is “unclear” if that will happen in the next five years. Notably, it was when Andrew was asked whether he had ever thought of being self-employed when he first mentioned an interest in pursuing postsecondary education:

Interviewer: Have you ever thought about starting your own business or being self employed?

Andrew: If I go to college I could probably live there and start my business there.

Interviewer: Have you thought about it before? Is it something you want to do?

Andrew: I’m thinking if I go to college or not.

This raises a question of whether and to what extent postsecondary education decisions influence employment decisions, particularly as regards self-employment, entrepreneurship, and social entrepreneurship. It is possible a college or university environment could provide the support, resources, opportunities, and service coordination needed to make social entrepreneurship a viable option for people with ID – essentially serving as a business incubator.

Where the concept of “self-sufficiency” differed from the social entrepreneurs with ID is that it was closely tied to having a source of earned income paying minimum wage or more. This remained true for Kimberly and Wayne, who are in the start-up stages of entrepreneurship.

Kimberly: I like getting paid. I like having money in real life too, for stuff, clothes, food. And if I want to get a place, to pay for rent. I’m just thinking ahead.

Wayne: It’s money I get to put into my bank account. I love getting a check and when I ride to the bank I feel happy when I have it in my hand. I earned it from my hard work.... To do anything in this world, you need money. It’s important to feel like you’re being appreciated for your work and what better way to appreciate someone than give them a paid position somewhere. Paying them and saying here’s your check is saying they appreciate your work.

While Kimberly and Wayne intend for their business to make a profit, they do not intend to depend upon profit from the business as their sole source of income. The participants with ID

working at Budding Futures explained that making money was important to them. There is a belief that making money will allow them to live the lives they want. Receiving a paycheck also connotes an appreciation for their work and is something they take pride in. While Wayne does not see a difference in the work he does at his paying job versus his volunteer jobs, he wishes he was paid for all of his work. Part of the reason Andrew likes his work at the community college more than at Budding Futures is because it pays more. Kimberly likes the work that she does at Goodwill, but wishes they were not cutting back on personnel so that she could have more hours and be paid more.

Advancement & Growth. Budding Futures does not employ people with disabilities in management or leadership positions. Subsequently, there are limited opportunities for advancement among the individuals with ID working there. For example, Andrew has been working at Budding Futures since its inception and his expertise in his current position was acknowledged by the management staff during research recruitment as well as by his key support person. Over the course of the interview, he revealed an interest in becoming a professional gardener. Yet, when asked if he ever wanted a management position at Budding Futures he replied, “I think that’s for the staff at the greenhouse.” There is currently no mechanism in place for employees with ID to advance within the organization. Moreover, if someone were promoted from the position of “Team Member” to a leadership or management position, there might need to be a change in payment as well as the membership fee requirement. In fact, the current organizational structure may be blocking advancement and limiting the potential for people with ID to be integrally involved. If the mission of the social enterprise is to provide work experience and skill development for people with ID in an inclusive environment, then this practice appears to diverge from their purpose – undermining the social mission. It bears consideration the extent

to which the work arrangement at Budding Futures qualifies as integrated employment if it is inclusive, but not equal.

For Kimberly and Wayne, it was not important to be in a management or leadership position at Budding Futures; perhaps because they did not have an expectation of promotion. However, a desire for more control (e.g., being the boss and making decisions) was one of the motivating factors behind wanting to start their own business. At one point, Wayne wanted to be more involved in the selling aspect of the business at Budding Futures, and Kimberly expressed an interest in being more involved in retail and running the cash register. It seems likely that these interests were discouraged by the way the organization was structured, sensing the limited potential for involvement. In the new start-up venture, Kimberly is taking a leadership role, drawing upon her strengths in organizing and planning events. Wayne wants to take a management role, tapping into an interest in office work and taking responsibility for helping his friends work together effectively.

For all of the participants with ID and their key support persons, it was important that there be a good fit between interest, skill, and employment. Although, for participants working at Budding Futures, fit was spoken of in reference to future employment. For participants pursuing social entrepreneurship, fit had been a motivating factor in choosing the employment pathway they were on. This is indicative of the effect that the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction on employment outcomes. Yet, the outcome measurements that are used to assess wage or salaried employment fall short of capturing the full picture with regard to social entrepreneurship.

Discussion

The outcomes of social entrepreneurship for people with ID need to be assessed at various stages and will differ depending upon where they are in the business development process. In other words, the way that an individual is participating and supported in their social entrepreneurship (regardless of whether or not they have a disability) will change as they progress from the idea development stage to entrepreneurial entry, and will continue to change as they move from start-up development to growth and sustainability. Currently, only entrepreneurial entry is being measured in disability employment, and this is being accomplished by rates of VR case closure in self-employment (Parker Harris et al., 2013). However, the social entrepreneurs with ID in this research are operating largely outside of the VR system and are not reflected in VR measures of case closure. Accordingly, we really do not know how many people with ID are pursuing entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship. Further, many people with disabilities pursuing these customized employment strategies may be working independently or using job supports that are provided by service agencies, but not necessarily for the expressed purpose of business development. It is likely there are more social entrepreneurs with ID like those participating in this research who are piecing together a patchwork that relies upon existing services to provide entrepreneurial support due to a lack of access or information regarding entrepreneurship-specific training and programs (Caldwell et al., under review-a). It also bears consideration that the majority of the participants in this research were multiply employed, in both paid and unpaid work. The rate of VR case closure in self-employment fails to capture the employment activities of such individuals or reflect an accurate picture of the current employment landscape.

The main limitations of social entrepreneurship as a model of employment for people with ID is that structures are not in place to allow for the kind of employment outcomes expected. Their businesses are expected to make a profit, and yet people with disabilities are structurally disadvantaged in saving and asset accumulation, contributing to the pervasiveness of asset poverty (Parish, Grinstein-Weiss, Yeong Hun, Rose, & Rimmerman, 2010). Some efforts have been made to enable asset development for entrepreneurs with disabilities (Harris & Weinberger-Divack, 2010), however, many social entrepreneurs with disabilities do not know these programs exist (Parker Harris et al., 2013). Further, little is known about how people with ID can use asset development programs, such as Individual Development Accounts, if they are not in control of their own finances or if the program is not accessible to people with intellectual impairments (Soffer, McDonald, & Blanck, 2010). The participants with ID and key support persons working at Budding Futures were not aware of resources such as special needs trusts. There is a great need for evidence-based best practices in entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship for people with ID, doing so in a way that is self-determined and interdependent. Service providers can play a key role in helping to inform and ensure access to information and resources, particularly given the opportunities that ABLE Accounts will afford individuals with ID in starting and growing a business.

Further, it is essential that disability employment outcomes incorporate outcomes that will be useful to social entrepreneurs with ID in growing and sustaining their business, not just to policymakers and service providers. Doing so requires expanding upon the definition of “self-sufficiency” conventionally used in disability employment, which underlies and substantiates the traditional-expectation barrier (Walls et al., 2001). In moving forward, we need to think beyond outcomes as simply direct monetary profit as a marker for success. Social entrepreneurship is a

relational process and there are many forms of profit that are indirect and nonmonetary. What is needed in disability employment is a shift away from research and practices that focus too narrowly on individual self-sufficiency. Policy is needed that understands and encourages innovative, growth-oriented entrepreneurship by people with disabilities, leading to hiring of others who may also have disabilities. The conflation to date has been particularly problematic given the difficulties that arise in interpreting entrepreneurial outcomes when developing policy and best practices (Parker Harris, Caldwell, et al., 2014).

There are limitations to this study that can help inform us in moving forward in this area. There is a great need for more research on entrepreneurship in our employment efforts with people with ID. In particular, there is need for research examining what personal characteristics or behaviors might make someone with ID a good candidate for entrepreneurship. The field of entrepreneurship research in general has striven to answer what leads to entrepreneurial success, inconclusively. The research presented here is not attempting to answer that specific research question, but rather start a conversation about what outcomes in social entrepreneurship can be expected, from the perspective of social entrepreneurs with ID themselves.

Given this focus, more depth of information has been provided in other manuscripts regarding the motivations of these participants, in particular the role of the social mission, goals and key support persons (Caldwell et al., under review-b); as well as the management process for participants, in particular the barriers they experience, business models, and detailing the specific supports that others provide (Caldwell et al., under review-a).

Conclusion

This article reported on the outcomes people with ID identify as important to their social entrepreneurship and their perceptions of success. Given contemporary advancements in

approaches to disability employment, there may understandably be some confusion over what qualifies as a “traditional” outcome or expectation. Social entrepreneurship challenges the outcomes conventionally conceived of in employment and requires thinking beyond hiring, retention, and weekly/annual wage to thinking in terms of monetary and nonmonetary profit, growth, and innovation. For the social entrepreneurs with ID in this research, profit held significant meaning. It was not synonymous with financial self-sufficiency or income, but rather social entrepreneurship was a vehicle for achieving self-determination in employment. Making a profit meant that the social entrepreneurs with ID interviewed could continue doing work they were passionate about to the benefit of themselves and their community/society. Growth involved expanding one’s market to reach new customers and hiring employees to increase the size and capacity of one’s business. The perspectives of social entrepreneurs with ID on growth are affected by many of the barriers experienced; readiness, financial, and support barriers in particular. As a result, growth was conveyed as something that would happen in the future after the business began to make a profit rather than as an integral part of a business and/or marketing plan that would lead to profit. This finding speaks to the need for increased access to entrepreneurial training and education. Interestingly, growth was also conveyed through a desire for their products/services to have a physical location (e.g., storefront or carried in local stores) and web presence (e.g., business website or via social media) – creating a place for themselves.

Within the disability context, entrepreneurial success is dependent upon societal reciprocity: what is viewed as legitimacy or being legitimized by others (De Clercq & Honig, 2009). Having one’s products/services included among others’ in the public domain (and open market) would serve to validate the social entrepreneur with ID’s business. This has particular significance given the role that the history of institutionalization and segregation played in

motivating the social entrepreneurs with ID and the impetus to distinguish business ownership from a hobby (Caldwell et al., under review-b). In discussing innovation, there was a need to distinguish between social entrepreneurship as an innovative employment strategy and what makes the social enterprise itself innovative. This conflation was problematic among key support persons in particular; shifting the focus of the business away from the social entrepreneurs' motivation and putting their social mission at risk of co-optation. Looking at the larger picture it appears that understanding profit and innovation are essential to assessing self-determination, and understanding growth is essential to assessing community integration and social participation.

Current outcome measures gauge the point of entrepreneurial entry and occasionally “retention” in the sense of business survival. There has been some discussion about sustainability of the business over the long-term, but there has not been much discussion regarding profit beyond self-sufficiency, growth beyond self-sustainability, or innovation beyond the innovativeness of such employment strategies. Innovation refers to the creation of something new or establishing new ways of doing things (Schumpeter, 2000) and what is needed now, to complement the implementation of innovative employment strategies, is innovation in how outcomes in employment are evaluated and measured. Yet, concepts like profit, growth, and innovation seem difficult to measure or evaluate. It is here that engagement with research in entrepreneurship should prove helpful, providing a guideline for going forward in identifying outcomes that will be useful to researchers, policymakers, service providers and other supports, and to social entrepreneurs with ID themselves. It bears consideration whether there is a possibility of developing a process for evaluating and measuring outcomes in employment for social entrepreneurs with ID that generates useful information, which can then be used by those

individuals to help sustain and grow their businesses. Doing so has the potential to make a substantive impact as an antipoverty strategy that empowers people with ID as change agents on a social and economic level. Better understanding motivation and management will help in determining appropriate and effective outcomes in social entrepreneurship for people with ID. In this effort, the findings of this research establish an informed foundation for future research and provides new insights for a variety of stakeholders that helps to inform the expectations we set for entrepreneurship as a viable employment strategy with people with ID.

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Table 1: Demographics of Participants with ID

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Other Work</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>
1. Nathan	Fair Trade, Organic Coffee	Artist	40	Caucasian
2. Derek	Fair Trade, Organic Coffee		29	Multiracial
3. Heather	Public Speaker & Consulting	Clinic Intern	25	Caucasian
4. Julie	Public Speaker & Jewelry Design	Student	20	Korean
5. Andrew	Greenhouse	Community College Janitor	24	Multiracial
6. Kimberly	Greenhouse & Baked Goods Start-Up	Goodwill	19	Caucasian
7. Wayne	Greenhouse & Baked Goods Start-Up	2 Volunteer Jobs	20	Caucasian
Average Age			25	

Table 2: Demographics of Key Support Persons

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Position/Title</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Other Work</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>
1. James	Job Coach	Job Coach	Entrepreneur	40	Caucasian
2. Charles	Co-Manager	Cousin		24	Multiracial
3. Mary	Partner	Mother		59	Caucasian
4. Lisa	Empowerer	Mother	Writer	52	Caucasian
5. Sylvia	Job Coach/Volunteer	Mother		58	Caucasian
6. Deborah	Job Coach/Volunteer	Mother		52	Caucasian
7. Bill	Job Coach/Volunteer	Father	Sales	61	Caucasian
Average Age				49	

Table 3. Criteria for Participants with ID

Participant	Goal of Self-Sufficiency	Profit-Oriented	Growth-Oriented	Innovation	Social Mission
Nathan	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Derek	Y ³	Y	Y	Y	Y
Heather	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Julie	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kimberly	Y	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ N ²
Andrew	Y ³	Y ¹	Y ¹	Y ¹	Y ¹
Wayne	Y ³	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ N ²

1. Refers to social enterprises that employ people with ID, but that are not owned or run by them.
2. Refers to enterprises being started by people with ID that do not have a social mission.
3. While not a goal of the business itself, it appears to be a personal goal.

Table 4. Criteria for Key Support Participants

Participant	Goal of Self-Sufficiency	Profit-Oriented	Growth-Oriented	Innovation	Social Mission
James (Nathan)	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Charlie (Derek)	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Mary (Heather)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lisa (Julie)	Y ³	N	Y	Y	Y
Deborah (Kimberly)	Y	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ N ²	Y ¹ N ²
Sylvia (Andrew)	Y ³	Y ¹	Y ¹	Y ¹	Y ¹
Bill (Wayne)	Y	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ Y ²	Y ¹ N ²	Y ¹ N ²

1. Refers to social enterprises that employ people with ID, but that are not owned or run by them.
2. Refers to enterprises being started by people with ID that do not have a social mission.
3. Depends on how self-sufficiency is defined. Does not necessarily mean financially self-sufficient or living independently, but rather being as independent as possible with support.