SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

-IDOLIZATION AND PITFALLS

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Abstract

PURPOSE: The purpose of this research study is to focus on the idolization and pitfalls of sustainable entrepreneurship, the study aims to highlight the challenges, gaps, and key barriers that hinder sustainable entrepreneurship in start-ups and small enterprises (SSEs). Examine the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and its potential implications on entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception.

METHODOLOGY: The thesis is based on a mixed research method centred around Drivhuset Borås collected data over the span of 7,5 years, whereas the last two years includes evaluations on sustainable entrepreneurship. The collected data is collected from the company's operating reports between the year 2016 and 2022, as well as from their in-house material, such as lecture material. Since the operating report for 2023 still is in progress the researcher was able to get access to the collected statistics for January to April 2023.

FINDINGS: This study provides examples of the impact key barriers and challenges faced by the start-ups and small enterprises have for effect. It has become obvious that, even though organisations such as Drivhuset Borås aim to educate and counsel individuals, the barriers and challenges are a persisting problem. There is a significant amount of research on business sustainability, which covers topics connected to the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability.

CONTRIBUTION: The thesis notes that sustainable entrepreneurship is still in its early stages, and there is a need for researchers to better understand its processes. The thesis has provided a better understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship as well as highlighted the issues regarding idolizations and pitfalls.

Keywords:
Sustainability; Holistic sustainability; entrepreneurial sustainability; entrepreneurial idolization; entrepreneurial challenges

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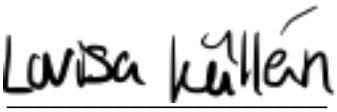

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1.Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting an introduction to the thesis subject of sustainable entrepreneurship, idolisation and pitfalls, followed by problem definition of the research topic, formulation of the research purpose, research questions and then the delimitations of the thesis.

1.1 Background

The definition and description of the word Entrepreneur is “take on the risk”, according to authors Barringer and Ireland (2019) the real definition of what an entrepreneur is an individual which pursues their passion. The entrepreneur seems to have become an idolisation, a dream where the individual can oversee how, when and what to do for work.

However, the context of sustainable entrepreneurship is rarely the main aim for entrepreneurs, they rather focus on their pursuit of freedom and independence within the business realm (Sharman 2019). The everyday entrepreneur seems inapprehensive about the significance of sustainable entrepreneurship. The concept of sustainable entrepreneurship highlights the importance of creativity and innovation in developing sustainable solutions to address the global challenges outlined by the United Nations (Sharman 2019). In Sweden, a country which is known for its innovation, there is a strong commitment to educating and promoting sustainable practices within society and businesses (Sustainable business in Sweden 2022).

Over the past years, Sweden has implemented policies and initiatives to endorse sustainable business practices, leading to its recognition as one of the most sustainable countries in the world (Government offices of Sweden; Ministry of Environment 2020). Organisations like Drivhuset Borås have played a significant role in supporting sustainable entrepreneurship by providing guidance and education to individuals and groups seeking help to develop, start and register their businesses. Through initiatives like lectures and consultations, Drivhuset Borås has fostered an entrepreneurial ecosystem, mostly targeting start-ups and small enterprises (SSEs), which encourages sustainable ventures.

The concept of sustainability encompasses multiple dimensions, including environmental, economic, social, and engineering aspects. Organisations are increasingly recognising that sustainability extends beyond environmental considerations to encompass economic viability and social responsibility (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine [NASEM] 2016). The United Nations' 2030 agenda for sustainability has driven the importance of addressing global challenges, positioning sustainability as a critical focus area for businesses and societies (United Nations [UN] 2015). Ban Ki-Moon's memorable statement during the United Nations Paris climate conference in 2015, where he stated, “We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last to be able to stop it”, which underscores the urgency and responsibility of the current generation to address climate change and its impacts.

The sustainable entrepreneurship plays a vital role in addressing global sustainability challenges, and Sweden stands as a notable example of a country promoting sustainable practices. Initiatives like organisations such as UngFöretagsamhet, Almi and Drivhuset Borås aim to inspire and educate entrepreneurs to develop sustainable business ideas, while the broad concept of sustainability demands ongoing research to tackle specific challenges.

Drivhuset Borås reports in their operational report from 2022 that they have started in their counselling sessions, to evaluate the entrepreneur's attitude towards sustainability and their business idea.

1.2 Problematization

The idolization and dream status of entrepreneurship became an all-time high during and after the COVID-19 pandemic back in 2020-2021. Many lost their jobs and were faced with economic uncertainty and chose to start their own companies. Entrepreneurship is often associated with a dream of success, but it is essential to acknowledge the inherent risks and challenges that entrepreneurs face. Few seemed to be aware of the challenges encountered by SSEs, or the demands which they need to meet. The idea of entrepreneurship is viewed with rose-coloured glasses, the common view is no longer connected to the definition of a risk taker but rather connected to the view of an influencer. The paradox of a risk taker and a responsible taker is an often-overlooked challenge for most entrepreneurs. The very nature of entrepreneurship has never been to be the responsible individual that makes safe choices but rather the individual that aims to solve problems and find solutions, no matter the risk it involves (Belz & Binder 2017). The lack of awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by SSEs contributes to high failure rates within this sector. SSEs have the highest failure rates and struggle to survive beyond the first year. Often, it is only after experiencing setbacks and financial losses that entrepreneurs come to realise the importance of sustainability in their business ideas and the need to address the challenges that hinder their progress toward sustainable practices. The author, Sörqvist (2014), of the business strategy book Lean, suggests that entrepreneurs and businesses often realise too late the need to become more sustainable and adopt new business models or strategies to become more resilient. However, these changes are often challenging and costly. It is recommended that businesses adopt sustainable business models and strategies from the beginning to be better prepared for the challenges they may face along the way (Sörqvist 2014).

The research about sustainability has been an actual topic since the 60's when the early pioneer of sustainability thinking, Rachel Carson, published her book "Silent spring" to bring attention to environmental impacts of pesticides. Carson's (1962) book as well as ecologists such as Paul Ehrlich and Barry Commoner, were contributors to sustainable research, by raising concern which helped to launch the modern environmental movement. The concept of sustainability gained its momentum at a political level with the United Nations' first conference on the environment in Stockholm in 1972 (UN 1972). It further crystallised with the publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987, which defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland 1987). This report laid the foundation for integrating sustainability into various categories, which also included business.

While research in sustainability has made significant progress, there are still gaps in the field of business sustainability that require attention. Cross-sectoral research, interdisciplinary approaches integrating social and environmental dimensions, effective measurement of sustainability outcomes, and addressing issues related to global equity and justice are areas that need further exploration (Kharrazi, Kudo & Allasiw 2018; Scholz & Steiner 2015). Bridging these research gaps is crucial for advancing sustainable entrepreneurship and finding solutions to sustainability challenges. Approximately 165 251 businesses have registered and started between 2021 and February 2023 (Företagarförbundet 2022; Nyföretagarbarometern 2023; Visma Spcs 2023). At the end of 2021 a total of 78 711 businesses were registered and started (Företagarförbundet 2022) and considered a significant

increase in comparison to the previous year, were both 2022 with its 74 140 (Företagarförbundet 2022) business starts and 2023's 12 400 (Visma Spcs 2023) so far are considered a huge decrease. According to Larsson (2023) the support and help for business development and financing available is often not suited for small and sole proprietorship.

Key barriers and challenges such as misconception regarding of what entrepreneurship implicates, limited resources, market competition, scaling and growth, limited bargain power, risk and uncertainty, managerial expertise, innovation and adaptability or operational efficiency, are all more pronounced as well as demanding for the SSEs than when compared with medium and large enterprises. The limited resources, lack of brand recognition, limited knowledge about sustainability, and lower market influence of SSEs increase the risk of failure in their sustainability endeavours.

Research on sustainable entrepreneurship sheds light on the complexities and realities of starting and running sustainable businesses and involves developing solutions that address sustainability challenges and create positive environmental and social impacts. Skolverket (2023) emphasises the importance of bridging the gap between entrepreneurship and sustainability, recognizing that innovative thinking and sustainable practices are essential for solving sustainability issues across various domains. The idolization of entrepreneurship as a path to instant success can lead to unrealistic expectations and a failure to recognize the inherent challenges involved. It is crucial to promote a more nuanced understanding of entrepreneurship that acknowledges the need for resilience, adaptability, and sustainable practices. Educating aspiring entrepreneurs about the realities and complexities of sustainable entrepreneurship can help them make informed decisions and develop strategies that align with long-term sustainability goals, as well as to adapt to the sustainable standards of the society.

Organisations like UngFöretagsamhet and Drivhuset Borås, established by the Swedish government and other entities, play a vital role in educating and guiding students in entrepreneurship, including sustainable entrepreneurship. They provide support, resources, and mentorship to aspiring entrepreneurs, helping them navigate the challenges of starting and running sustainable businesses. As well as understanding the importance to recognise that entrepreneurship is not solely a path to success and prosperity.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to focus on the idolization and pitfalls of sustainable entrepreneurship within SSEs. The study aims to highlight the challenges, gaps, and key barriers that hinder sustainable entrepreneurship in SSEs. Examine the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and its potential implications on entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception.

Provide insights into the negative aspects resulting from the lack of research and understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship. Inform future research endeavours and contribute to the development of sustainable business practices across industries and enterprise sizes. As well as to contribute to the resilience and long-term success of SSEs through the development of sustainability strategies.

By addressing these objectives, the research study aims to shed light on the specific challenges and barriers that entrepreneurs face in pursuing sustainable business practices.

Ultimately, the research endeavours to contribute to a more sustainable and resilient business landscape by fostering the integration of sustainability principles in SSEs.

1.4 Research Questions

RQ 1: What are the key barriers and challenges that entrepreneurs encounter in adopting and integrating sustainable business practices?
RQ 2: How does the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship influence entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception?
RQ 3: How can entrepreneurial education and support programs address the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and promote a realistic understanding of its challenges and opportunities?

1.5 Delimitations

In this research study there will be some delimitations considered. This is to ensure a cohesive and reliable study. By delimiting the scope of the study, it can better be focused on a specific area of interest and present a more nuanced understanding of barriers, gaps and challenges associated with the context of sustainability. The following limitations:

- Time delimitations: This research will focus on the past 7,5 years to better understand sustainability practices and challenges have evolved over time. It will not focus on data before these years, because the main data will be collected from Drivhuset Borås.

- Size limitations: This study will focus on SSEs to better understand sustainability challenges and practices of each. It will not focus on medium to large enterprises.

- Industry delimitations: The research will focus on SSEs to better understand sustainability challenges and practises within those means. It will not focus on one unique industry or medium to large enterprises.

- Geographical limitations: This research study will focus on a specific country and region, Sweden and Borås, to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities associated with sustainability in that context. It will not focus on collecting data from another country or region, other than Sweden and Borås.

2. Previous research and theoretical framework

This chapter focuses on presenting previous research which has been conducted on sustainability and entrepreneurship. By presenting previous research it allows the author to show an existing research gap which this thesis aims to highlight. With this, a theoretical framework is presented with theories as well as concepts used in the discussion when analysing the empirical data.

2.1 Previous research

Previous research on sustainable entrepreneurship largely focuses on only the environmental aspects, rather than the combination of social, financial and environmental aspects. This is also the case when it comes to research about sustainable entrepreneurship (Rogojina & Claes 2020; Sharman 2019). The United Nations has at several occasions noted that, even though sustainability is considered a relatively new concept still, it requires to develop new strategies to be able to balance the aspects of social, financial and environmental sustainability.

2.1.1 Start-ups and small businesses and holistic sustainability

Research on sustainable entrepreneurship has gained significant attention in recent years. While sustainability research in various industries and businesses started in the mid-20th century, research specifically focused on SSEs is relatively new, with a span of about 20 years (Rogojina & Claes 2020; Sharman 2019). The lack of information and research on sustainability in SSEs has resulted in an unjust image about entrepreneurship among young individuals when it comes to starting their own businesses, leading to a rise in new ventures (Rogojina & Claes 2020; Sharman 2019).

The author Wells (2013) points out that the literature on business models often neglects sustainability aspects. This neglect may be attributed to the inherent turbulence and short lifespan of many businesses, preventing them from recognising the importance of sustainability. Sörqvist (2014) suggests that businesses often realise too late the need to become more sustainable and adopt new business models or strategies to become more resilient. However, these changes are often challenging and costly. It is recommended that businesses adopt sustainable business models and strategies from the beginning to be better prepared for the challenges they may face along the way (Sörqvist 2014). The author means that businesses which do not implement sustainable business models and strategies may encounter challenges with laws, regulations or even lose consumers (ibid).

A holistic approach to sustainability is vital in understanding the interconnections between social, economic, and environmental dimensions (Rogojina & Claes 2020). Recognizing the interdependence of these dimensions is crucial, as addressing one aspect without considering the others have unintended consequences which hinder progress towards sustainability goals. This holistic perspective also emphasises stakeholder engagement, participation in decision-making processes, and a long-term orientation that considers the needs and interests of future generations (Sharman 2019).

Implementing a holistic approach to sustainable entrepreneurship requires interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations. Many challenges are complex and require diverse perspectives and expertise to develop effective sustainable solutions (Sharman 2019). The holistic approach can be applied in various contexts, from individual lifestyle choices to organisational sustainability and public policy development. It involves considering the

social, economic, and environmental impacts of decisions and actions to achieve sustainable outcomes. Striving for a balanced solution within these dimensions is crucial for creating a more resilient and equitable future (Sharman 2019). Sustainable entrepreneurship could be described as a business strategy which focuses on the value for society, the environment as well as for the business.

2.1.2 Sustainable models and Entrepreneurship theories

As a result of research about sustainability in the past an attempt to bridge the gap of sustainability in entrepreneurship has been made by developing models and strategies which aim to help businesses to become more sustainable in these aspects. Unfortunately, it seems to have had limited success as the gap is still very much present (Rogojina & Claes 2020). These are the models and strategies which aim to help the business to become more sustainable, depending on the context and specific sustainability challenges being addressed, that are most successful.

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle is a model-tool used for continuous improvement to manage sustainability performance in businesses (Garza-Reyes, Joseth, Kannan, Anass & Usha 2018). It consists of four stages: planning, doing, checking, and acting. The PDCA cycle is often used in combination with other sustainability management frameworks. Such as The Natural Step Framework (NSF) which is based on sustainability science and systems thinking. It aims to identify four system conditions necessary for a sustainable society which are the elimination of harmful substances, the use of renewable resources, the promotion of social justice, and the respect for ecological limits (Anon 2010).

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a methodology used to assess the environmental impacts of systems and products throughout their entire life cycle (Hauschild, Rosenbaum & Olsen 2017). The LCA helps identify areas for improvement and informs sustainable design development by considering the environmental implications from raw material extraction to disposal. Another framework that also works on the impact on the environment is the Fashion Loop (FL) framework, developed by Mistra Future Fashion (2016), which guides fashion businesses toward more circular and sustainable choices (FashionUnited 2019; The Ecologist 2021; Sustainable Brands 2019). The FL consists of six categories: Design for circularity, Raw material inputs, Manufacture, Use, and Loop enablers. These steps provide a comprehensive and holistic framework for fashion companies to adopt sustainable and circular practices throughout their value chain. Which connects to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 (UN 2023). They aim to guide global sustainable development efforts, addressing a wide range of sustainability issues such as poverty reduction, climate action, gender equality, and responsible production and consumption. As well as to the Sustainable Entrepreneurship theory focuses on the role of entrepreneurs in promoting sustainable development (Spiller & van der Have 2018). It emphasises creating businesses that not only aim for profit but also contribute to environmental and social goals set by the UN (Sharman 2019).

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory, developed by John Elkington in 1994, suggests that businesses should balance their focus and resources across three main pillars: environment, social, and economic (Elkington 1994). This approach is a more in-depth predecessor of the sustainable entrepreneurship theory, which focuses on a sustainable business by considering the broader impact beyond just financial performance.

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) framework, commonly used in sustainable entrepreneurship for SSEs, helps entrepreneurs identify and develop key elements of their business models (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010). These elements include value proposition, customer segments, revenue streams, and cost structure. Incorporating sustainable measures and practices within the BMC framework enables entrepreneurs to contribute to the UN's sustainability goals. These frameworks and theories are generally considered to provide valuable tools and concepts for understanding and implementing sustainability in various contexts, from business operations to societal and environmental considerations.

2.1.3 Entrepreneurial education

The concept of sustainability has been extensively integrated into the educational system in Sweden, spanning various disciplines such as finance, business, education, and public policy (Spiller & van der Have 2018). Recognizing sustainability as a critical global challenge (UN 2023), the Swedish government has incorporated sustainability and sustainable entrepreneurship into the educational curriculum with the aim of contributing to the achievement of global goals (Skolverket 2023).

Sweden is renowned for its culture of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit (Skolverket 2023). Notable companies like Spotify and IKEA originate from Sweden and have expanded their reach worldwide. Entrepreneurship education has become a vital component of the Swedish educational system. Initiatives such as Ung Företagsamhet, which is affiliated with the global organisation Junior Achievement Worldwide (JA Worldwide 2023), has a significant role in educating and providing practical entrepreneurship experiences to students from a young age. Skolverket (2023) has designated entrepreneurship as a key subject in the Swedish curriculum, emphasising the importance of solution-based thinking, risk understanding and fostering an understanding of failure and re-evaluation as integral aspects of personal and social development.

The integration of entrepreneurship education in the Swedish educational system reflects a commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial skills and mindsets among students. By equipping young individuals with the knowledge and practical experience of entrepreneurship, Sweden aims to cultivate a new generation of innovative and socially responsible entrepreneurs. The emphasis on sustainability in the educational context aligns with the broader goals of addressing global challenges and contributing to a sustainable future.

2.2 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is used to provide an overview of the theories which will be used in the analysis of the collected data and material.

2.2.1 The Fashion Loop

The Fashion Loop tool is a framework which seeks to help mainly fashion companies to become more circular and sustainable (FashionUnited 2019; The Ecologist 2021; Sustainable Brands 2019). The tool is often displayed as a circular model and consists of the following six categories.

1. Design for circularity highlights the importance of designing products which are modular, durable as well as repairable. It also focuses on the ability of designing products which can easily be disassembled and recycled at the end of their life cycle.

2. Raw material inputs focus on the importance of sourcing sustainable and environmentally benevolent materials, this often includes organic fibres, recycled fibres and mitigating the use of virgin resources.

3. Manufacturing: highlights the need for reducing emissions and waste throughout the manufacturing process, as well as the social responsibility within the supply chain and on improving the conditions of the workers.

4. Retail: aims to promote a sustainable habit amongst the consumers regarding consumption. This includes reducing waste in the e-commerce and retail sectors, rental and subscriptions-based models.

5. Use: this focuses on the extension of a product's life through the different stages, such as maintenance, repair, reuse and when it comes to promoting recycling and a responsible end-of-life disposal.

6. Loop enablers: is centred on the infrastructure and systems which can enable the practices of circular fashion, such as funding mechanisms, digital technologies and policy frameworks.

The fashion loop framework was developed with a focus on fashion and sustainability, the principles and concepts underlying these frameworks can be applied to various industries. The fashion loop is a comprehensive framework which focusing on circular and sustainable practices (Mistra Future Fashion 2016).

2.2.2 Triple Bottom Line Theory

The triple bottom line (TBL) theory is a framework which emphasises the importance of considering the three dimensions of sustainability, which are environmental, economic and social (Elkington 1994). The triple bottom line theory encourages companies to adopt a more holistic and sustainable approach when assessing their impact in all dimensions, to keep these dimensions in a balance.

Economic Dimension: is connected to the company's financial performance and viability. This includes ensuring that the company is economically sustainable, which indicates that they are generating profits and are maintaining financial stability. It also encompasses other factors linked to the company's finances, such as the generation of revenue, profitability, economic growth, cost management and general financial accountability.

Environmental Dimension: focuses on the company's ecological impact, which includes assessing the practices and activities of the company in relation to environmental sustainability. This includes assessing the company's pollution, energy efficiency, waste generation, resource consumption and general mitigation on climate change. The main aim is to encourage companies to minimise their negative environmental impacts, as well as promote practices and activities which support environmental preservation and balance (ibid).

Social Dimension: analyses the company's effect on both stakeholders and society. This includes aspects such as human rights, labour practices, social equity, customer satisfaction, the well-being of employees as well as community engagement. By encouraging the company to address social issues and contribute to the well-being of the people affected by the company's existence, they create positive social outcomes.

By emphasising the interdependence of the three dimensions of the TBL theory, the company gets an understanding on how the long-term success mainly depends on the company's ability to balance them (ibid). The TBL theory strives to optimise positive outcomes across the three dimensions which create and promote both stakeholder value as well as overall sustainability.

2.2.3 Business Model Canvas framework

The business model canvas (BMC) framework is most often applied in SSE to ensure sustainable entrepreneurship (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010). The BMC framework provides the entrepreneur with an overview of the company and a better understanding where to implement sustainable practices as well as measurements to mitigate risks. The BMC is designed to educate and help entrepreneurs, via a visual design, to understand what their key elements are and how to develop them according to their business model. The BMC framework consists of nine blocks which together convey how the company plans to provide value as well as gaining income. These nine blocks constitute the three focus points of a company, Feasibility, desirability and viability (ibid). The structure of nine blocks of the visual tool is as following:

1. Customer Segments: The first block aims to identify the different customer groups or segments of the market which the company aims to provide a solution for. This helps the entrepreneur to define its target customer, which is based on their unique characteristics, behaviours and needs.

2. Value Proposition: The second block focuses on describing the unique value which the company offers their customers. This includes services, products or any other solution which the company may provide which solves the customers need and help create value.

3. Channels: The third block's focal point is to understand how the company can reach as well as deliver the value proposition to their targeted customers. This involves identifying what channels the company can communicate, sell and distribute its services, products and other value.

4. Customer Relationships: Block number four aims to define what type of relationship the company can establish and maintain with its target customers. By considering the aspects such as retention, customer acquisitions, support and some level of providing personalisation and self-service.

5. Revenue Streams: This block is often the focus for many companies, it outlines which ways the company can generate revenue from their value proposition. This involves revenue models, the pricing mechanisms as well as other sources of income.

6. Key Resources: The sixth block aims to identify the company's essential resources which are required to be able operate the company, and to be able deliver its value proposition. This includes intellectual property, human resources, physical assets, technology, as well as any other resources which are deemed critical for the company.

7. Key Activities: The seventh block aims to highlight the company's key activities which are needed for the company to be able to perform and to deliver their value proposition, as well as to operate effectively. This includes service delivery, core operational processes, production activities, and any other key functions that the company deemed relevant.

8. Key Partnerships: The second to last block aims to identify the company's external entities or organisations which they might be able to collaborate with, which is important for the company so they can enhance their operations and value proposition. This encompasses distribution partnerships, strategic alliances, supplier relationships or any other forms of cooperation.

9. Cost Structure: The last block aims to outline the incurred costs by the company, needed to operate and deliver its value proposition. This encompasses both the fixed and variable costs of the company, such as marketing expenses, overheads, production costs and other important operational expenditures.

The Business Model Canvas Framework is a strategic management tool which provides a visual framework for designing, analysing, and communicating business models (ibid). This gives them a better understanding of the holistic view of a company, as well as it encourages discussions about the interdependencies between the models' different elements.

These categories aim to provide the company with a comprehensive and holistic view of sustainable practices for fashion companies to adopt throughout their value chain. The fashion loop tool helps fashion companies to overcome the challenges which traditional linear production models come with, which includes overproduction, waste and high carbon emissions to mention a few. By promoting sustainable practices and reducing waste through the principles of circular economy, such as repair, reuse and recycling, the fashion loop tool helps the companies to reduce their carbon footprint, drive a more sustainable habit around consumption amongst their consumers as well as improving their brand value and image.

3. Methodology

This chapter focuses on presenting the specific research approach and the methodology chosen for this thesis. Follow suit will the description and argumentations of the data collection, then the research quality will be presented as well as discussed. Lastly, an implication on the ethics of the research.

3.1 Research approach and design

The thesis is based on a mixed research method centred around one company's (Drivhuset Borås) collected data over a span of 7,5 years, whereas the last two years includes evaluations on sustainable entrepreneurship. The problematisation and purpose aims to highlight an existing research gap within the subject of sustainable entrepreneurship in SSEs.

Bryman (2016) argues that by using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, also known as mixed methods, the researcher can view both "soft" and "hard" data. When considering both the "soft" and "hard" data the researcher can gain a clearer result (Wallén 1996). By analysing the "hard" data the researcher focuses on the objectivity and logicality of the study, and when analysing the "soft" data the researcher focuses on the subjectivity, such as understanding people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour and interactions (Bryman 2016; Wallén 1996 & Patel 2019). In this thesis the "hard" data is the statistics, and the "soft" data is the educational material.

In the lead up to the start of the 8 weeks of the thesis process the company and the researcher negotiated regarding the information and aspects that are available and could be used for the study. Starting with this approach provides the researcher an understanding of how the company has worked previously and how it has developed, as well as spotting gaps which could benefit from more research and development.

3.2 Data collection

The collected data is collected from the company's operating reports between the year 2016 and 2022, as well as from their in-house material, such as lecture material. Since the operating report for 2023 still is in progress the researcher was able to get access to the collected statistics for January to April 2023. Statistics which will become publicly available at the beginning of the following year. The statistics focuses on the number of entrepreneurs seeking consultation, consultations, activities, educational momentums, started businesses as well as followers on social media. To ensure that the study is well rounded the statistical data will be accompanied by collected material from the company's internal education and activities material.

3.3 Data analysis

When using a mixed, deductive and pragmatic research methods, the data and material are collected using structured methods and tools which gather empirical confirmations. When the data and material is collected, it is analysed using statistical techniques to derive objective and measurable insights as well as text analyses. This research study uses statistical techniques such as data preparation, descriptive statistics and interpretation of results for analysing, as well as text and material analysis.

3.3.1 Methods of analysis

By using data preparation, it ensures that the collected data and material is organised and prepared for analysis. This process could involve cleaning, transforming, ensuring completeness as well as addressing any missing information or values. Whilst descriptive statistics is used for summarising and describing the main characteristics of the material and data. This includes measures such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. Descriptive statistics provides an initial overview of the data and material, which facilitates the understanding of its distribution and patterns. When the data and material is prepared and described, it's analysed by using the technique of interpretation of result. The findings and results are interpreted and analysed in context to the research questions and theoretical frameworks posed in the study. This means that the statistics and the material is compared towards each other, towards previous research and towards the theoretical frameworks. These comparisons are then compared and discussed.

3.3.2 Theoretical Framework

The three theoretical frameworks, TBL, BMC and FL, of the study provide foundations for the study by connecting existing theories, models and concepts which are relevant to the subject of the research study. The framework facilitates the process of identifying gaps in the existing research, as well as developing relevant research questions. The theoretical framework is also useful and provides the research within the broader academic discussion, and by using a theoretical framework which provides a base which can be used for comparing the results and findings with previous research.

A theoretical framework acts as a guide which selects and designs research methods, as well as what techniques for data collection to use. The frameworks provide a theoretical perspective which states how the data will be collected, interpreted and analysed. It assists in interpreting the data and understanding the data by providing theoretical connections through which to view and comprehend the findings.

3.4 Research quality

According to Bryman (2016) when it comes to research quality it is viewed differently depending on what method has been used. In qualitative research the quality is determined by viewing confirmability, transferability, credibility and transferability (Bryman 2016). While in quantitative research the quality is determined by viewing the reliability and validity of the study. Different from qualitative research which views research from “soft” perspectives such as experiences, emotions, political beliefs, religion or gender, the quantitative researcher will view the research from “hard” perspectives such as logical, objective and analytical. In quantitative research it is important for the researcher to be able distance oneself from the work, as Patel (2019) states, “...the researcher needs to be replaceable, but the result needs to be the same.”

From 2016 and till today, Drivhuset Borås log each consultation, lecture or activity they have during each year, from 2022 they also started to evaluate each consultation to see if the entrepreneur and their ideas could be considered sustainable. At the beginning of each year Drivhuset Borås publishes their operating report, in which the data is presented. Which is presented in their operating report at the end of that year.

3.4.1 Validity and Reliability

Being able to ensure the validity and reliability of research findings is crucial in a research study. By considering key aspects such as construct validity, internal validity, external validity, reliability, dependability, confirmability, reflexivity, as well as triangulation, researchers can enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of their study (Byman 2016, Patel 2019). Considering that the study is a mix between quantitative and qualitative methods and through the process evolved with deductive and pragmatic approaches, it is important to acknowledge both methods of evaluating validity and reliability.

In this research study the construct validity is essential to ensure valid and reliable measurement as well as ensuring the consistency and accuracy in the collection of data collection. While most of the data already have been collected by the company, and by several different employees, the material from their lectures and activities has changed slightly depending on which employee has used it. Equally important is the internal and external validity, while the internal is connected to controlling the case-and-effect relationship between the study's variables. Considering that the variables are dependent on the information provided by the company, and the company has shifted employees during these 7,5 years, it can be argued that it gives the study a low internal validity. The external consider the characteristics of the research context and the generalizability of the findings. This study has many samples which are spread out over 7,5 years, which gives it a high external validity.

The reliability is according to Bryman (2016) equally important for the study, as it is via reliability the consistency and stability of the study's findings can be estimated. Which in this study was collected by the company under direct guidelines to ensure a just result in their operating report.

Dependability is associated with qualitative research and is similar to reliability. It focuses on the documentation of the research study, its consistency and stability of the research process and findings. Since the collected data and material is both produced by the company, the researcher had to stay objective and neutral to the material during the research process. However, even though confirmability is important in regard to avoiding basing data on preconceptions or biases, it is important to stay critical and investigate where the data and material originates from. By triangulating the data and materials using multiple sources, such as company statistics, lecture and activity materials for validation of the findings. Using these different sources provides a comprehensive context to the problem. It is also critical to be able to self-reflect regarding own assumptions, biases as well as personal preferences. Reflexivity acknowledges and addresses potential influences on the research process and findings, in this study the researcher chose to incorporate more sources to be able to provide valid findings, after critical consideration regarding the data as well as personal preferences.

By considering these key aspects, the researcher strengthens the study's validity and reliability, as well as enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the research study and findings, contributing to a robust and meaningful exploration of sustainable entrepreneurship and its associated phenomena.

3.5 Ethics

Research involves collecting data and materials from and about people, no matter what method a researcher uses there will always be some ethical issues throughout the study (Creswell & Creswell 2023). Prior to the start of the research study the author met up with

Drivhuset Borås, and together with the company the author agreed upon terms and conditions for the research process as well as what data and material was available and allowed to be used for the study. This is important because it gave the author and the company an opportunity to discuss potential ethical issues, such as what would happen if the study found negative aspects at the company and within the company's material - would the company for example let the author publish the findings.

The researcher was invited to participate in the company's day to day activity, this includes sitting in during counselling sessions, lectures at different schools and activities held by the company. The company always introduced the author and what the purpose of the authors presences. This allowed the author to conduct the research openly and respectfully.

By conducting a quantitative collection of data, which focuses on the "hard" data and is associated with objectivity, logic and analysis, the author did not experience ethical issues regarding personal collaborations with participants, such as GDPR forms or collecting material which could lead back to that particular individual. However, in the qualitative collections of data biases such as being too close to the company needs to be considered and evaluated. The "soft" material is regarding the company's lecture material, which they personalise depending on who within their close-knit team will hold it. By only considering the "soft" material and the "hard" data objectively and not make any assumptions the author stayed neutral throughout the process, it is important to not put personal biases or assumption when analysing the material or the data, to be able to find an honest result.

The company was open to any research subject related to their industry, especially if the study found something that could be beneficial to them as well. Their only demand was that the entrepreneurs, students or others which the researcher met during the study were met with respect and would be kept anonymous. The author may only share data with approved individuals at the company, all data and material which is not published should be approved by the company to write about, as it is confidential. At the end of the research study the author shall not possess any confidential information which is provided by the company. However, the company owns the data which they have collected, but the author owns the findings of the study.

4. Results and analysis

This chapter's purpose is to present the result of the empirical data collected during the research. This will facilitate the possibility of answering the research question, which were stated at the beginning of this master thesis.

4.1 Introduction

The results presented in this chapter are based on the data collected from Drivhuset Borås operational reports between 2016 and 2022, as well as from their internal, and at the time unpublished, statistics for January to April of 2023, as well as from Drivhuset Borås lecture material. These are organised into presentation of data, statistical data, educational data and educational material. Each subsection presents a different aspect of the collected data and material, which will be analysed in the next chapter.

4.2 Presentation of data

Drivhuset Borås has offered consultations, lectures and activities, such as events, networking and workshops, since 2006 in Borås. They have in total since 2016 met and educated 1 659 individuals via counselling, 13 617 individuals via activities and lectures both on location and remotely, as well as through social media, according to their operation reports.

4.2.1 Statistical data

In the operation report for 2016, Drivhuset Borås reports that 1 128 individuals participated in a total of 88 activities held by the company, as well as 26 planed and completed course momentums. A total of 226 individual entrepreneurs sought counselling in various stages of idea to start business, this resulted in 226 counselling sessions. Drivhuset Borås also helped with the process to register and start 50 individual businesses, which 74% of was sole proprietorship and 14% were corporations.

Drivhuset Borås reports in the 2017 operating report that they had 1 550 participants during their 120 completed activities. They arranged and held in 32 course momentums, as well as met 180 entrepreneurs in 175 counselling sessions. Drivhuset Borås helped with the registration and start of 54 businesses, consisting of 53% sole proprietorship, 18% corporations, 18% limited partnership and 9% other form of business.

In the operation report for 2018, Drivhuset Borås reports that 1 620 participants in the 125 completed activities held by the company and 171 individual entrepreneurs sought counselling, which resulted in 240 counselling sessions. Drivhuset Borås arranged and completed 42 course momentums. They report having helped with the process to register and start 39 businesses, of which 61% were sole proprietorship, 17% corporations, 14% limited partnership and 8% consisted of another form of business.

During 2019 a total of 1 810 participated in the 110 completed activities held by Drivhuset Borås. They arranged and completed 55 course momentum and assisted in the start of 52 businesses, which consisted of 68% sole proprietorship, 25% corporations and 7% were limited partnership. Drivhuset Borås met 182 entrepreneurs in 252 counselling sessions.

By 2020 Drivhuset Borås reports a total in 18 company arranged activities they met 1 260 participants and 243 entrepreneurs sought counselling which led to, according to their operating report, 312 counselling sessions. They arranged and completed 28 course

momentums. Drivhuset Borås assisted in the start of 76 businesses, which consisted of 42,11% was sole proprietorship, 56,58% was corporations and 1,32% was economic association.

Drivhuset Borås reports in the 2021 operating report that they had 1 260 participants in the 15 company held activities, as well as arranged 27 course momentums. 206 entrepreneurs sought counselling which resulted in 256 sessions and 76 started businesses. Out of these 76 businesses Drivhuset Borås reports that 30,26% was sole proprietorship, corporations 64,47% and limited partnership 5,26%.

During 2022, Drivhuset Borås, started to evaluate the entrepreneurs and their ideas based on a 1-9 scale to see if the entrepreneur and their business idea could be considered sustainable. An evaluation system from 1: Anti-sustainable to 7: Strong sustainability, which uses a quantitative method to evaluate the entrepreneur's attitude towards sustainability, as well as how sustainable their business idea is. According to their operating report, 1 927 individuals participated in activities held by the company and 334 entrepreneurs sought counselling, resulting in 336 counselling sessions which 196 were considered sustainable according to the company's sustainability criteria. A total of 87 businesses were started with the help of Drivhuset Borås, 31,0% were sole proprietorship, 4,59% limited partnership, 2,29% economic association/non-profit association and 62,0% corporations. Drivhuset Borås reports that they held in 50 course momentums and 46 completed activities.

The operation report is still in progress, Between January and April of 2023 the company states that they met 112 participants in 11 completed activities, as well as held in 16 course momentums. Drivhuset Borås unpublished statistics show that they have met 89 entrepreneurs which has resulted in 99 counselling sessions. According to Drivhuset Borås 97 out of the sessions were considered sustainable. During these four months Drivhuset Borås states that they have assisted with the start of 9 businesses, which consists of 77,78% corporations and 22,22% sole proprietorship.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Individual entrepreneurs	226	180	171	182	243	206	334	89
Total counselling sessions	184	175	240	2552	312	256	336	99
Sustainable counselling sessions	-	-	-	-	-	-	196	97
Business started	50	54	39	52	76	76	87	9
Activities	88	120	125	110	18	15	46	11
Course momentums	26	32	42	55	28	27	50	16
Participants	1 128	1 550	1 620	1 810	1 260	1 260	1 927	112

Table 1, Compilation of Drivhuset Borås statistics between 2016 and April of 2023.

4.2.2 Entrepreneurial education

Drivhuset Borås offers forms of education within the subject of entrepreneurship, they lecture at the University of Borås, many of Borås upper secondary schools and Yrkeshögskolan, to mention a few.

Drivhuset Borås reports in their 2017 operation reports that they complete 32 course momentums, this consisted of workshops such as “Kreativitet som verktyg”, “Business Model You”, “LOOPA” and “Idéskapande affärsutveckling och affärsmodeller”.

These workshops focus, according to Drivhuset, on innovation and creativity. The “Kreativitet som verktyg” workshop was held for the education of pre-school teachers. The “Business Model You” workshop focused on how to pitch a business idea, brand and oneself. The “Idéskapande affärsutveckling och affärsmodeller” workshop was held for the Yrkeshögskolans Digital Business Developer, aimed to inspire and provide tools for idea generations as well as developing and understanding different forms of businesses. “LOOPA” is a course held by Drivhuset Borås, it consists of six occasions and according to the company, educates the participants on how to develop a business idea, find the right target market and group, understand the value propositions of the product and/or service.

Drivhuset Borås reports in their operation reports for 2018 through to 2022 that their complete course momentums consisted of external lectures and workshops, which is based on Drivhusets LOOPA-method together with additional material depending on the area of education that is taking part of the material. The purpose from 2016, …*students understand that the commitment to problem solving, and development work is fundamental to becoming attractive on the labour market and to creating good conditions for self-success*, remains and subjects such as target customer, marketing, the brand, customer benefit, value proposition, creativity as a tool and LOOPA-method have been the focal point.

In the 2019 operational report, Drivhuset Borås states that they have put more focus on sustainable entrepreneurship. Drivhuset Borås expanded their lecture material with Business Model Canvas, pitching, the customer journey, empathy map, sales plan, social selling, SMARTA-goals as well as SPIN-method. They also put focus on teaching students to be able to question their business model based on the UNs global goals for 2030, according to their report.

In the 2021 operational report, Drivhuset Borås states another expansion in subjects and courses available, sustainable entrepreneurship is a focal point and the social Innovation-momentum which aims to inform students how social, environmental and economic sustainability can be applied to their business models, has been implemented.

In the 2022 operational report, Drivhuset Borås informed about Next, a project Drivhuset Borås have together with Boråsregionen as well as closely linked to UF. This project's primary goal is, according to the report, to inspire, give counselling and enrich UF-students experiences. This consists of Drivhuset Borås holding a total of 9 lectures for about 400 upper secondary students, at different upper secondary schools in Borås and its adjacent municipalities.

In Drivhuset Borås 2023 the goals are focused on two momentums, social innovation - to stimulate the sustainable adjustment and Next - to support and enrich UF-students in upper secondary school.

These momentums are conditioned on sub-momentums such as minimum number of lectures, participants, sustainable counselling sessions, number of started businesses as well as the development of a new tool which enables the implementation of sustainability in the business journey and provide competence in the creation of new circular business models.

4.3 Educational material

The material analysis is a research method which is based on the systematic review and analysis of documents, reports, books and other material, which is provided by Drivhuset Borås, that are relevant to the research study's questions. By reviewing all their educational material that they currently use, it provides a more accurate picture of how Drivhuset Borås educate and what they educate. Drivhuset Borås have guidelines regarding what their lecture material should consist of these are determined by the board of directors as well as the Drivhuset organisation which all Drivhuset belongs to. Material such as books, power-points and theoretical models related to entrepreneurial education will be collected, analysed and discussed in this thesis. The material, which was provided by Drivhuset Borås, will be analysed and relevant information regarding the subject and the research will be extracted and incorporated in the analysis of the result. The analysis will be guided by relevant theory and previous research on sustainable entrepreneurship. For this research study material analysis is a valuable tool in the collection of data and material. The analysed material provides important insights as well as knowledge regarding the subject and how it is taught.

Drivhuset Borås offers lectures and educational material to educate mainly students about entrepreneurship. The main focus in these lectures is Business idea, business plan, business model, sustainable entrepreneurship, market research and how to pitch. These areas are part of Drivhusets own course book "LOOPA", which is based on the LOOPA method. The aim with the course book and subjects is, according to Drivhuset Borås, to educate and introduce entrepreneurship to students. They focus on the bases of what entrepreneurship is, problem solving. The LOOPA method highlights that entrepreneurship isn't a linear journey, the process of starting a business could be challenging if the entrepreneurs aren't able to identify a good enough problem.

Drivhuset Borås focuses in their lecture materials on how to identify problems, generate solutions and ideas, understanding what a business model is and how the different forms of models work. For example, in one of the lectures Drivhuset Borås holds for Nordiska textilakademin in the spring of 2023, Drivhuset Borås states that the business plan is linked to the expectations of the businesses economy and connects to the choice of business model. The lecture also discusses different business models such as consultation, e-commerce, retailing, drop-shipping, subscriptions, the amazon model/marketplace, hook and bait, low price base, freemium, the Facebook-model and franchise. However, it is common to use more than one model, mix or change throughout the business journey according to Drivhuset Borås.

How to determine what sort of business model the entrepreneur should use, is according to Drivhuset Borås, often the one that feels most natural, but they highlight the need to understand who it is that will pay in the end for the product or service, as well as understanding what the target groups problem and needs are. The aim is to educate the

entrepreneur to understand how to create value for their customers with their service or products, and how to communicate it where the customers are.

The concept social innovations are based on the UN global 2030 goals. Their sustainable entrepreneurship educations focus on transitioning away from the purely economic focused business development techniques. Drivhuset Borås aims to equip the entrepreneurs the knowledge and understanding necessary to create business which promotes socio-ecological regeneration.

In the lecture material about marketing and sales from Drivhuset Borås, it focuses on the importance of researching the market to understand the competition with other businesses. The aim is to educate the entrepreneur in how to best create and communicate their business and products value out to the customer.

Drivhuset Borås highlights in their lecture material the importance of performing a professional pitch. They describe it as a short oral presentation of the businesses value proposition where the aim, according to Drivhuset Borås, is to sell the ideas and convince listeners of the entrepreneur's message. Drivhuset Borås regards an entrepreneur's ability to sell and influence both personally and professionally, an important capability. Drivhuset Borås aims to educate and train students to become more confident and better in the ability of presenting and selling business ideas by pitching.

5. Concluding discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse and discuss the result and findings presented in the previous chapter. First a concluding discussion is presented, followed by a section where the research questions are answered. To conclude the chapter, research contributions and managerial implications along with limitations and future research are presented.

5.1 Analysis

The purpose of this research study has been to focus on the idolization and pitfalls of sustainable entrepreneurship, the study aims to highlight the challenges, gaps, and key barriers which SSEs face from a sustainable and entrepreneurial perspective. Based on the opening chapter regarding the problematisation and research purpose, the following research questions were developed.

'*What are the key barriers and challenges that entrepreneurs encounter in adopting and implementing sustainable business practices?*'

'*How does the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship influence entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception?*'

'*How can entrepreneurial education and support programs address the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and promote a realistic understanding of its challenges and opportunities?*'

The analysis of the collected statistics and educational material have suggested that there are various perspectives influencing the answers to the research questions. This section of the thesis aims to analyse the collected data and material based on the theoretical frameworks. The theoretical frameworks provide foundation for the analysis of the research findings. The main theoretical of the study is The Fashion Loop framework (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), which is supported with two smaller theoretical frameworks, The Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010) and Tripel Bottom Line (Elkington 1994).

The form of education which Drivhuset Borås within the subject of entrepreneurship, is by providing events, lectures and workshops at various educational institutions. Their educational materials focus on key aspects of entrepreneurship, such as business ideas and models, marketing, pitching, and sustainable entrepreneurship. The educational materials provided by Drivhuset Borås align with the Fashion Loop tool, BMC and TBL, which are a framework designed to help companies become more circular and sustainable (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010; Elkington 1994; Mistra Future Fashion 2016). The Fashion Loop tool, which focus more on the fashion industry, consists of six categories that guide companies towards sustainable practices throughout their value chain.

The first category, Design for circularity (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), emphasises the importance of designing products that are modular, durable, repairable, and easily recyclable. This aligns in some aspects with Drivhuset Borås' focus on teaching entrepreneurs to understand the value and sustainability of generating product ideas that solve existing issues. The second category, Raw material inputs (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), highlights the significance of sourcing sustainable and environmentally friendly materials, which is aligns with both the BMC and TBL values (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010; Elkington 1994). Both frameworks focus on sustainability in all directions, and by addressing the importance of

sustainable materials Drivhuset Borås could help educate more sustainable entrepreneurs. However, Drivhuset Borås lacks the emphasises in communicating the importance of mitigating the use of virgin resources, the three frameworks prioritise when it comes to long-term.

The third category, Manufacturing (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), addresses the need to reduce emissions and waste in the manufacturing process. Drivhuset Borås aims to educate entrepreneurs about social responsibility, however not on such as deep level. The fourth category, Retail (ibid), aims to promote sustainable consumption habits among consumers. Drivhuset Borås emphasises issues regarding overproduction in the e-commerce and retail sectors, as well as rental and subscription-based models, which align with the Fashion Loop's principles. At the same time as they encourage entrepreneurs to make profits (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010).

The fifth category, Use (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), focuses on extending the lifespan of products through maintenance, repair, reuse, and responsible end-of-life disposal. Drivhuset Borås aim to educate entrepreneurs about the importance of these practices, aligning with the Fashion Loop's emphasis on product life extension and responsible consumption. By actively using the BMC in their educations the entrepreneurs gain a better understanding of how they can build long-term value in the product. The sixth category, Loop enablers (Mistra Future Fashion 2016), addresses the infrastructure and systems that support circular business practices, such as funding mechanisms, digital technologies, and policy frameworks. Drivhuset Borås offers guidance and education regardless of the orientation of their business idea. By incorporating sustainable practices and promoting circular economy principles, entrepreneur’s gains knowledge to become more realistic and resilient.

5.2 Discussion

This study has given examples of the important key barriers and challenges which SSEs are faced with, and what effect these have. It has become obvious that, even though organisations such as Drivhuset Borås aim to educate and counsel individuals, the barriers and challenges are a persisting problem. There is a significant amount of research on business sustainability, which covers topics connected to the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability. The research gap within the SSE and sustainability might be the biggest gap when considering the increasing numbers of businesses that start each year.

As mentioned, the author of this thesis finds it important to inform about the previous research made about SSE and holistic sustainability. By viewing the existing literature and research it was possible to identify a clear research gap. The research about sustainability has been an actual topic since the 60's when the early pioneer of sustainability thinking, Rachel Carson, published her book “Silent spring” to bring attention to environmental impacts of pesticides. Carson’s (1962) book as well as ecologists such as Paul Ehrlich and Barry Commoner, were contributors to sustainable research, by raising concern which helped to launch the modern environmental movement. The collected data from Drivhuset Borås also highlights the continued importance of actively educating regarding sustainable entrepreneurship. Drivhuset Borås actively works with the visual tool BMC, which is a framework for businesses to become and evaluate their sustainability. However, the material analysis suggests a lack in sustainable tools with a longevity purpose. A solution could be to implement the TBL theory, which focuses on a balance between an organisation's social, environmental and financial sustainability. Or implementing the FL framework into other industries other than the textile industry which are already using it. Considering the fact that

Drivhuset Borås are lecturing for both Nordiska textilakademin and Textilhögskolan, the FL framework would facilitate the students' understanding for what sustainable entrepreneurship is.

The findings further suggest that according to Skolverket (2023) entrepreneurship, innovation and business is an important key aspect of a healthy community. With the help of organisations such as UF and Drivhuset Borås are trying to bridge the gap when it comes to entrepreneurial education in Sweden. There are still huge numbers of students that do not have access to this form of education, and a lot of older entrepreneurs still have not had any education in entrepreneurship. For many the "try and error" method has and still is the way to go. The answer to '*How does the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship influence entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception?*', would suggest that the lack of proper long-term education and guidance in the early stages of entrepreneurship leads to more unnecessary risks and decision making. The idolization of entrepreneurship seems to be linked to an overconfidence in their own abilities, no matter the situation, some entrepreneurs seem to be clueless regarding understanding who their target customer is and who would pay for their products.

Since sustainable entrepreneurship still is in its incipient stage authors such as Belz and Binder (2017) believe that researchers need to better understand the paradox of the actual processes of sustainable entrepreneurship. Belz and Binder (2017) categories sustainable entrepreneurship into six phases; 1) recognising a social or ecological problem; 2) recognising a social or ecological opportunity; 3) developing a double bottom line solution; 4) developing a triple bottom line solution; 5) funding and forming of a sustainable enterprise and lastly 6) creating or entering a sustainable market. The lack of research during the processes of becoming a sustainable entrepreneur result in difficulties in identifying and recognising social and ecological problems as well as opportunities.

The findings suggest that personnel at Drivhuset Borås would benefit from further education and understanding of the paradox, that is sustainable entrepreneurship, to be able to properly address the complex research question '*What are the key barriers and challenges that entrepreneurs encounter in adopting and implementing sustainable business practices?'*. Perhaps, the fact that all the personnel are entrepreneurs themselves, is both the main issue as well as it is a merit. By educating and acknowledging the key barriers and challenges, such as limited resources, market competition, scaling and growth, limited bargain power, risk and uncertainty, managerial expertise, innovation and adaptability or operational efficiency, the misconception regarding of what entrepreneurship is would lead to a more prepared and resilient entrepreneur. Drivhuset Borås did develop an evaluation system in 2022, to measure an entrepreneur's attitude towards sustainability, their attitude towards sustainable improvements of the idea as well as how sustainable their business idea is, and the collected data shows that almost 100% of 2023s counselling sessions are considered sustainable. However, Drivhuset Borås rarely in their educational material educates how a business idea is sustainable long term regarding environmental, social and economic or not. Which suggests that the student entrepreneurs seeking counselling at Drivhuset Borås already have a sustainable attitude towards entrepreneurship. As mentioned at the beginning of the study, an entrepreneur is a risk-taking person that follows its dreams and passions. Which contradicts the commonly known interpretation of sustainability, Brundtland (1987) did define sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The findings of the research suggest that the answer to '*How can entrepreneurial education and support programs address the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and promote a realistic understanding of its challenges and opportunities?'* is not a completely straightforward one. A suggestion would be for the organisations, such as Drivhuset Borås, to highlight more than only the beginning part of starting a business. The aspects which Drivhuset Borås bring up during their lectures are important for the education of new entrepreneurs, their focus is on the early stages of entrepreneurship. A suggestion for them would be to offer more concrete guidance for the entrepreneurs that plan on starting a business regarding both what challenges as well as opportunities they most likely will encounter.

The complexity of the research questions suggests similar answers, which are to understand the paradox of sustainable entrepreneurship and educate resilient, long-term strategies to new entrepreneurs. Their evaluation system is good on paper, if the person making the evaluation properly understands the criteria's. The organisation of Drivhuset would benefit from an educational and pedagogical model, with the purpose to prepare the student entrepreneur to incorporate their sustainability knowledge into entrepreneurship. This would also facilitate the academic understanding of the paradox of sustainable entrepreneurship, as well as encourage continued innovative entrepreneurs to start new businesses.

6. **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this thesis has examined with its research questions the key barriers and challenges in adopting sustainable business practices, the influence of idolization on entrepreneurial decision-making and risk perception, and the role of entrepreneurial education and strategies in addressing these issues. While considering the thesis delimitations such as time, size, geographical and industry.

The analysis of collected statistics and educational material revealed various perspectives influencing the answers to the research questions. The study highlighted the persistence of barriers and challenges faced by SSEs, despite the efforts of organisations like Drivhuset Borås to educate and counsel individuals. The research gap in SSE and sustainability is significant, considering the increasing number of businesses being established each year. The thesis emphasised the importance of previous research on SSE and holistic sustainability. The study recognized the need for sustainable tools with a long-term purpose, such as implementing the TBL theory, BMC framework or the FL framework in industries beyond the textile industry. Drivhuset Borås' collaboration with educational institutions indicates the importance of educating students about sustainable entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, the findings highlighted the significance of entrepreneurship, innovation, and business for a healthy community. Organisations like UF and Drivhuset Borås are working to bridge the gap in entrepreneurial education in Sweden, but many students still lack access to such education. The idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship was found to influence decision-making and risk perception, often resulting in overconfidence and a lack of understanding of target customers.

The thesis noted that sustainable entrepreneurship is still in its early stages, and there is a need for researchers to better understand its processes. Belz and Binder's (2017) categorisation of sustainable entrepreneurship provided a framework to identify and recognize social and ecological problems and opportunities. The personnel at Drivhuset Borås would benefit from further education on the paradox of sustainable entrepreneurship to address the key barriers and challenges entrepreneurs face.

To address the idolization of sustainable entrepreneurship and promote a realistic understanding of its challenges and opportunities, the thesis suggested that organisations like Drivhuset Borås should offer concrete guidance beyond the early stages of entrepreneurship. Highlighting both challenges and opportunities would better prepare entrepreneurs for the journey ahead.

To summarise the thesis, the complexity of the research questions calls for an understanding of the paradox of sustainable entrepreneurship and the development of resilient, long-term strategies for new entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs could benefit from an educational and pedagogical model that prepares the student entrepreneurs to incorporate their sustainability knowledge into their businesses. Such an approach would contribute to a deeper academic understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship and encourage innovative entrepreneurs to start new businesses with sustainability at their core. The journey towards sustainable entrepreneurship is an evolving one, and there is much more to explore and discover in the pursuit of a sustainable future

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