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THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Doctoral dissertation

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Abstract

In the dissertation, I explore the issue of shaping social change through initiatives classified as social innovations. I provide an overview of institutional mechanisms available to organizations and discuss the micro and macro perspectives of institutionalization. The dissertation draws attention to the topic of the subjective experiencing of institutions, i.e., the way in which norms and principles are perceived by individuals during their application.

Social innovations emerging as a result of *in vivo* experimentation, become a space for questioning and recreating social norms, beliefs and rules, based on actual experience. Experimenting provides an opportunity for reaching individual experiences, discussing them, and highlighting the diversity of perspectives of people participating in the process (experiential surfacing). Experience can be a carrier of institutional content in the context of shaping norms, rules and beliefs in group and community processes. During active co-creation of innovation, abstract concepts acquire a practical dimension, thanks to which their internalization is possible. New ways of behaving and perceiving reality travel with people to new contexts, new workplaces, and activities in which the patterns are recreated and thus become subject to dissemination.

Based on the conducted research, I propose a model of multidimensional collaboration within social innovation communities (co-doing, co-being, co-learning, co-deciding). Collaboration understood this way stimulates reflexivity in the process of creating and developing innovations and makes it possible to draw on the diverse experiences of beneficiaries and co-creators of initiatives. In addition, I describe the ping-pong mechanism of perspectives, which supports the co-creation of solutions and negotiation of norms in group and community processes. From the dissertation, one can also learn about the dynamics of

urban communities, the values they currently represent and the ways they morph and develop.

Key words

<social innovation, institutional change, experiential surfacing, experiential learning, social transformation, community building, collaboration, co-creation, impact, governance>

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Abstract in Polish

W niniejszej rozprawie eksploruję zagadnienie kształtowania zmiany społecznej przez inicjatywy klasyfikowane jako innowacje społeczne. Dokonuję przeglądu mechanizmów instytucjotwórczych dostępnych organizacjom, omawiam mikro i makro perspektywę instytucjonalizacji. Poruszam tematykę subiektywnego doświadczania instytucji, czyli tego jak normy i zasady odbierane są podczas ich stosowania.

Innowacje społeczne powstające w efekcie eksperymentowania *in vivo* stają się laboratorium, przestrzenią kwestionowania i odtwarzania norm, przekonań i zasad społecznych w oparciu o rzeczywiste doświadczanie. Eksperymentowanie daje okazję, by sięgać do indywidualnych doświadczeń, omawiać je i uwypuklać różnorodność perspektyw osób partycypujących w procesie (experiential surfacing). Doświadczenie może być nośnikiem treści instytucjonalnych w sytuacji kształtowania norm, zasad i przekonań w procesach grupowych i społecznościowych. Podczas aktywnego współtworzenia innowacji abstrakcyjne pojęcia i koncepcje nabierają wymiaru praktycznego, dzięki czemu ich internalizacja jest możliwa. Nowe sposoby postępowania i postrzegania rzeczywistości podróżują wraz z osobami do nowych kontekstów, nowych miejsc pracy i aktywności, w których są odtwarzane i tym samym, podlegają dyseminacji.

Na bazie przeprowadzonego badania proponuję model wielowymiarowej współpracy w społecznościach innowacji społecznych (co-doing, co-being, co-learning, co-deciding). Tak rozumiana współpraca stymuluje refleksyjność w procesie tworzenia i rozwijania innowacji oraz pozwala sięgać do różnorodnych

doświadczeń beneficjentów i współtwórców inicjatyw. Ponadto opisany został mechanizm ping-pong perspektyw, który wspomaga współtworzenie rozwiązań i negocjacje norm w procesach grupowych i społecznościowych. Z rozprawy można dowiedzieć się także o dynamice miejskich społeczności i o wartościach, które współcześnie reprezentują oraz o tym jak morfują i rozwijają się.

Key words in Polish

<innowacje społeczne, współtworzenie, współpraca, zmiana instytucjonalna, transformacja społeczna, doświadczanie, budowanie społeczności, wpływ społeczny, impakt, partycypacja>

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INTRODUCTION

This doctoral dissertation is devoted to the topic of social innovation and its relation to social change. Following the words of Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, Bakker and Marti (2018), who wrote that rules, norms and beliefs are negotiated orders which can be renegotiated to promote social change, I formulated a broad, exploratory research question:

Do the agents of social innovation shape the impact of their organization and transform reality, and if so, how?

My intention was to systematize and enrich the body of knowledge on the methods of exerting institutional pressure available for social innovation. Moreover, I noticed the need to deepen the understanding of innovative organizations that strive to achieve social goals, which in social innovation language are called "positive social impact", "causing a social change" or "transforming reality". To accomplish these tasks, I researched the local organizations that are very successful in inventing and disseminating social innovations and I tried to learn their perspective. Our cooperation lasted over 1.5 years, during which time I had an opportunity to observe the ongoing change and to capture change-triggering activities. My findings are embedded in the theory of change and institutions, thanks to which I answer the research questions posed. Fortunately, the institutional theory is as diverse and flexible as the social innovation ecosystem.

This dissertation is an attempt to put into words and legitimize the best practices of negotiating and shaping institutional change. It is also a presentation of tools that social innovation initiatives can use to impact social reality. Moreover, it is

an encouragement to organize social innovation reflectively, and to consider the risk factors accompanying this demanding challenge.

The concept of social innovation still seems fluid and unclear, despite many attempts to define this kind of practice and its purpose. Social innovation “refers to the generation and implementation of new ideas about how people should organize interpersonal activities, or social interactions, to meet one or more common goals” (Mumford, 2002, p. 2). Moreover, it can be a product, process or procedure that addresses the unmet social needs (European Commission Strategy, 2013). In fact, it is a multi-actor and multilevel process that addresses social issues in a new way and, therefore, proposes alternative solutions to solve it (Haxeltine et al., 2016). The authors participating in the Transit Research Project (2014-2017), (e.g., Haxeltine et al., 2016; Avelino et al., 2019; Westley et al., 2016; Howaldt et al., 2015), jointly agreed that social innovation initiatives can “challenge, alter or replace existing institutions”, and can therefore impact the social realm and trigger social change (Haxeltine, Avelino et al., 2016, p. 19). In this dissertation, I take up the challenge of improving the understanding of social innovation and its impact. I explore the ways of organizing social innovations that enable the achievement of common social goals, and those that enable diffusion of alternative solutions and approaches.

Social innovation is an important phenomenon, the effectiveness of which is recognized in practice, scholarship, and policy. It is also a meaningful phenomenon because large-scale, systemic responses to social challenges turn out to be largely ineffective, leaving major social challenges unsolved. While in contrast, social innovations provide new tools and methods of addressing social problems that allow for more precise design of solutions, and for the reduction of risk of large-scale social interventions. As a critical narrative, social innovation reveals the failure of systemic processes and structures, while laying the

foundations for alternative ways of proceeding. Social innovation often takes the form of a bottom-up initiative, giving voice to the groups directly affected by the problem. Agency and self-help are the elements of social activity that contemporary civil society seems to need (and want) for further development. This is evidenced by numerous bottom-up activities that reflectively lead to new ways of addressing social issues. What I would like to emphasize at the outset is the interdependence of social innovations with other elements shaping social reality. Neither social innovation nor legal regulation alone can solve complex social challenges, and must become a part of a wider policy (Avelino et al., 2016). Social innovation can be a powerful tool for shaping the future. However, it must be accompanied by a combination of processes happening at the individual, interpersonal and systemic levels.

Social innovation is embedded in a larger structure, it depends on institutions and, simultaneously, affects them. According to Nilsson (2015), there are spheres of institutional arrangements, social policy, and practice which cannot be successfully designed nor controlled without reaching for the experiences of individuals who are a part of them. The action which brings positive results in one sphere might negatively affect another at the same time. To uncover the "hidden aspects of institutionalized power" (Nilsson, 2015, p. 376) it is necessary to reach for the experience of people who are affected by it. This is because experience provides another type of knowledge which is complementary to cognition and is needed to capture the complexity of social reality (Kolb, 1984). According to Nilsson (2015), the experiential character of institutions is simultaneously the cause of great inertia, but also a space to negotiate institutions. Therefore, in my research, I analyze the experience as a vehicle of institutional content and opportunity for shaping, negotiating, and transmitting norms, rules, and beliefs.

Social innovations play an increasingly important role in a society's development. It is believed that social innovations may support the processes of socioeconomic transformation toward sustainable models of production and consumption, and toward fair distribution of income and resources (Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015). Organized civil society activities aimed at solving specific social challenges have become a recognized tool of the European Union's policy, as evidenced by support programs such as the Seventh Framework Program (Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015). Transition research, which has so far usually taken a macro perspective and informed about transformation at the policy level, has recently shifted its focus to the local scale - that is, to the implementation of policy in action (Köhler et al., 2021). Authors (e.g., Loorbach et al., 2020; Isaksson & Hagbert, 2020) indicate that "concrete actions that initiate and develop transitions are implemented in a local context" (Köhler et al., 2021, p. 1). Political directives and global visions of development, take a real dimension when they are introduced in a given neighborhood, community or organization. Only in action are the visions confronted with the variables of social reality and tested *in vivo*. The community thus becomes an experimental space – a laboratory (Skrzypczak, 2020). Ostrom (2000) explains that communities are self-regulating bodies, capable of acting for the common good, if they are organized according to the certain communitarian rules. Moreover, community is a buffer between private and common interest (Skrzypczak, 2016), a space in which a balance can be achieved through direct experience and through negotiations of the norms, rules, and beliefs. Community is, therefore, a valuable partner in the process of transformation towards sustainability.

The reorganization of the socioeconomic space (called transformation) is, in fact, an experiment (Ulug & Horlings, 2019), in which the nature and number of the variables are not fully known. Similarly, social innovations are developed through

a process of experimentation. The initiatives activate processes and actors that have so far been dormant. They uncover and address the social needs of those who were marginalized. The development of uncertainty in such conditions is a dynamic and non-linear process which requires flexibility on the part of all actors involved. Flexibility here means enabling the space for reflection on the current development of events, and on future consequences. It also means the openness to constant negotiation and modification of rules – change is an ongoing process; triggering change is experimenting.

I contribute to the theory of social innovation by deepening the knowledge about the process of shaping social impact through organizational practice. I pay particular attention to the mechanisms of shaping norms and beliefs at the level of local communities. I analyze the ways of organizing social innovations that allow us to reach for collective experiences related to the perception of existing institutions and to adjust innovation accordingly. I describe the organizational mechanisms and processes by which norms and rules are negotiated within social innovation initiatives. Based on empirical research, I present multiple scenarios where collective experience informs actors of social innovation on how to adapt the practice to the context, needs or resources at hand. I develop the concept of cooperation and co-creation of social innovations as a form of organizing social innovations which enables the pursuit of common social goals.

I have been interested in social innovation since at least my MA studies. For my thesis back then, I conducted research in a public hospital. The aim was to find out how the non-medical aspects of hospital treatment – physical space, symbolic interpretation, and interaction with staff members - affect patients waiting in the corridors for their appointments. Social innovation in the healthcare system is one of the most studied cases today, especially in the United States. Its effectiveness is, however, heavily limited by the restrictive

medical environment. Therefore, for the purpose of doctoral dissertation, I decided to study more flexible social innovations, which are grown from the bottom up.

The type of social innovation I have chosen to research this time is the initiatives that experiment *in vivo* and favor flat organizational structures. These initiatives are based on knowledge and resources that are in the hands of innovators and community members. They emerged to satisfy certain specific needs that were otherwise not addressed, and to pursue a specific social goal. These are Open Jazdów Settlement, Food Cooperative Dobrze and Paca 40 Action Space - urban social innovations, which are bottom-up, community-driven initiatives. I chose these three case studies of well-known, local social innovation initiatives and focused on their organizational dynamics. When selecting the cases, I was looking for large, local communities gathered around socially innovative activities. My motivation was to have a chance to observe how social innovation spreads to a larger audience. The initiatives I have chosen have this ability of attracting citizens of Warsaw and visitors from around the world, and of surviving despite challenges and adversities. During the research, I used qualitative methods – observations and deep, semi-structured interviews. I studied organizational values, interpersonal relations, conflicts, and the rules of everyday work to recognize meaningful patterns.

The dissertation is divided into four main chapters – the literature review, research methods and approach, empirical results, and final discussion. The literature review combines the sociological and management perspectives on the topic of social innovation and institutional change. First, I define social innovation, and describe its origins and the importance of research. Second, I explore the theory of institution and change. I explain the multifaceted character of institutions and introduce the necessary terminology. I focus on micro-

foundation dynamics (Powell et al., 2008), and micro-level mechanisms enabling the emergence of norms and rules. I explain the meaning of experience as vehicle of institutional content. Later, I locate the concept of social innovation in the institutional theory and review the knowledge on the transformative power of social innovation and its capacity to challenge, alter or replace institutions. Subsequently, I describe the macro and micro mechanisms of institutional pressure exaggeration which are available to social innovations. I explain the role of experiential surfacing and experiential learning in detail, and relate it to the theories of norms emergence. The empirical chapter is dedicated specifically to micro-level perspective. I describe the structures and mechanisms supporting the collective shaping and internalization of norms. I analyze the organizational and intraorganizational processes in which individuals learn and invent new ways of doing things. I analyze collective experience as a mechanism for creating and transmitting institutional content. I describe different scenarios in which norms and structures are developed and/or internalized through experiential surfacing and learning, phenomena in which social initiatives often abound (Nilsson, 2015). The dissertation is ended with a discussion of the research results in the context of the existing literature.

2. SOCIAL INNOVATION AS A TRIGGER OF CHANGE

This chapter is a literature review that introduces the reader to the theoretical background of the conducted research. To discuss the transformative role of social innovation, I embed the dissertation in the institutional theory, which enables analysis of the process of change. Change is a permanent element of social reality, while the concept of transformation contains an element of intentional triggering the change. Social innovation is one of such triggers that impacts the direction of change (Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015). Institutions, which function as “the rules of the game” in societies (North, 1990, p. 3), are changing over the time in different pace and scope. Institutions that we consider obvious today (such as the family), were once shaped based on principles perceived as right, described by law and engraved in the norms of behavior, habits and beliefs of people. On the other hand, those institutional elements (or lack of them - the so-called institutional voids) that do not meet social needs today, or prevent individuals from developing and realizing their potential, are subject to the processes of change. The institutional environment requires a constant work on its evolution in order to serve effectively the constantly changing societies. Social innovations are those practices and ideas that help to navigate the progress in a direction of human and ecological well-being. They help to acknowledge and understand the “practices and actions that change society for the better” (Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019).

Social innovation is a vehicle for agency in the process of change, which means that it equips individuals and communities with tools necessary to participate in the process consciously and actively. Therefore, social innovation is a mechanism that enables the progress to become more participatory, inclusive, and meaningful. The social innovation initiatives most often appear where the systemic solutions fail or have not yet been developed. They take various forms,

and appear in multiple spheres of social, political, and economical life. They serve a variety of purposes, such as raising human capabilities, reducing barriers to social participation, or reducing environmental pollution. A feature of an effective social innovation is the ability to trigger the social change - the ability of an initiative and its actors to transform behaviors, laws, social norms, and/or markets (Haxeltine, Avelino, et al., 2016). Inducing such change is possible by means of institutionalization mechanisms, which are intentionally or intuitively used by social innovators in their pursuit of creating a future closer to social needs and values, closer to the people.

This chapter is an overview of the mechanisms and processes that enable civil society to participate in shaping the institutional system. The list of mechanisms is open, and certainly will require updates, when new opportunities and new limitations reveals. Particularly promising seem to be digital tools that support remote communication, cooperation and exchange. We can already observe how ideas travel across all continents through digital channels to become global.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: first I present the concept of social innovation (2.1), its origins, definitions, and examples of practice. Next, I describe the elements of institutional theory that are the basis for a discussion on social change and role of social innovation in this process (2.2). Finally, I introduce the transformative social innovation theory and continue the literature review by listing the macro and micro mechanisms of institutionalization used in practice by social innovation initiatives (2.3 and 2.4).

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL INNOVATION IN SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

The question is often asked – what exactly are these social innovations? Or how do they differ from mere innovations? In this chapter I intent to present the

nature of this phenomenon. I explain the concept of social innovation and point out the advantages and disadvantages of various definitions and propose my own. I explain the role that social innovations play in today's social reality and the reasons for which they are created. I point to the multiplicity of forms in which social innovations manifest themselves in practice, as well as to the element of coherence, the features that connect various initiatives. I discuss the political and scientific discourse on social innovation, and also point to the attempts to manipulate the narration. In conclusion, my intention is to present the concept and ecosystem of social innovation as broad and diverse, but at the same time coherent in nature.

2.1.1 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

There are multiple definitions of social innovation. The variety results from the fact that social innovation takes multiple forms, it originates from various entities, and its aims and goals are changing together with a society development. Social needs strongly depend on time and context, and therefore are difficult to theorize.

Different definitions serve various purposes of research and practice therefore it is not crucial to develop the one universal understanding of social innovation (Chiappero-Martinetti, Budd & Ziegler, 2017).

Table 1 Definition of social innovation review.

Source	Definition
Mumford, 2002, p. 253	"The term social innovation, as used here, refers to the generation and implementation of new ideas about how people should organize interpersonal activities, or social interactions, to meet one or more common goals. As with other forms of innovation, the products resulting from social innovation may vary with regard to their breadth and impact"
Phills Jr., Deiglmeier & Miller, 2008, p. 38	„A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions, and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals.“
Moulaert et al., 2013, p. 2	„Socially innovative actions, strategies, practices and processes arise whenever problems of poverty, exclusion, segregation and deprivation or opportunities for improving living conditions cannot find satisfactory solutions in the ‘institutionalized field’ of public or private action“
European Commission, 2013	„Social innovations are new ideas that meet social needs, create social relationships and form new collaborations. These innovations can be products, services or models addressing unmet needs more effectively.“
Cajaiba-Santana, 2014, p. 5	Social innovation "is based on collective actions that take place inside a given social system, which are determined by underlying institutions." Roles of agents "co-evolve" in a process of social innovation.
Haxeltine et al., 2016, p. 2	"Social Innovation is conceptualised as a change in social relations, involving new ways of doing, organising, framing and/or knowing. We approach social innovation as a process and as a qualitative property of ideas, objects, activities and/or (groups of) people"
Nicholls et al., 2015, p. 52	„Social innovations are defined as new products, processes, procedures, policies and designs that seek profoundly to change authority and resource flows and eventually tip entire systems towards greater resilience and sustainability“
Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, Bakker & Martí, 2018, p. 3	Social innovation is "the agentic, relational, situated, and multi-level process to develop, promote, and implement novel solutions to social problems in ways that are directed toward producing profound change in institutional contexts"

Source: Own elaboration based on articles cited in the table.

I divide the definitions of social innovations into three categories: 1) those that relate to the purpose of projects and initiatives, 2) those that relate to the motives for their creation, 3) and those that describe the way in which social innovations are created and implemented. One of the oldest but still relevant

and often cited definition is the one of Mumford (2002, p. 253). "The term social innovation (...) refers to the generation and implementation of new ideas about how people should organize interpersonal activities, or social interactions, to meet one or more common goals". **Meeting the common goal** is understood in the dissertation as serving the common good, as it is further explained in the text. Alternatively, some of the definitions take more individualistic approach, in which social innovation deals with different social needs of multiple groups of people. According to European Commission (2013) „innovations can be products, services or models addressing unmet needs more effectively."

Transformation is another goal of social innovation, which is mentioned in one of the definitions of social innovation. Hexeltine et al. (2016) claims that innovation which is social „lead(s) to positive societal transformation" (p. 2), and Nicholls et al. (2015) explain that social innovation "seek profoundly to change authority and resource flows and eventually tip entire systems towards greater resilience and sustainability". Transformation is therefore understood as positive and leading to greater sustainability.

Some of the definitions include a **motivation of actors** who initiate the innovation, or the aim or mission of initiatives to create positive social impact. E.g.,

„A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions, and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals" (Phills et al., 2008, p. 38). However, as McGowan and Westley (2017) emphasize, motivation and aims are not necessarily distinguishing social innovation from other types of activities, and it is difficult to clearly define the motivation of each social actor. Moreover, the future of today's innovation is burden with uncertainty. There are known cases, which initially were aimed to improve the social reality, but with a time they

brought significant negative results. As an example, Phills et al. (2008) gives intelligence test. A psychologist (Benet) invented the test with a motivation to improve education system through the possibility of distinguishing children with mental incapability from „those failing for environmental rather than genetic reasons“. Unfortunately, the test became a tool for segregation and exclusion towards those who failed it. Phills et al. (2008) therefore explains that in social innovation the balance of value is shifted from achieving private benefit – understood as “gains for entrepreneurs, investors and ordinary (not disadvantaged) consumers” (p. 39) - to benefiting the society. According to the definition of Phills et al. (2008), the intelligence test has failed as social innovation, or perhaps it has never been the one.

Hexeltine et al. (2016) defines social innovation from a perspective of **interpersonal relations**. They understand it as “changes in social relations, involving new ways of doing, knowing, organizing and framing things” (p. 2). Therefore, social innovations are relation based and require engagement of various stakeholders.

Definitions of social innovation often relate to its **processual character** and intent to capture the effect that it produces. Wijk et al. (2018, p. 3) describe social innovation as “the agentic, relational, situated, and multi-level process, to develop, promote, and implement novel solutions to social problems in ways that are directed toward producing profound change in institutional contexts”. As written in CRESSI project (p. 6, part B), the process takes place “at different socio-structural levels (...) that intentionally seek to change power relations and improve human capabilities” wherever the current distribution of power, sustains the social problem that supposed to be solved. That is, the long-term effect of social innovation, is described here as **institutional change** in a direction of improvement. Another dimension of change occurs at the local, community

level, and improvements in everyday life of people. Moulaert et al. (2013, p. 3) have been researching disadvantaged neighborhoods and brought the conclusion that “socially innovative actions, strategies, practices, and processes arise whenever problems of poverty, exclusion, segregation and deprivation or opportunities for improving living conditions cannot find satisfactory solutions in the ‘institutionalized field’ of public or private action”. The definition refers to the grassroot innovations, that emerge within a community, and to serve the community. The change in this case is an empowerment of disadvantaged groups.

Social innovation is a complex socio-economical phenomenon that requires involvement of various actors and **collective work** towards achieving a goal. Cajaiba-Santana (2014, p. 5) writes that social innovation is “based on collective actions that take place inside a given social system, which are determined by underlying institutions”. He also underlines that it depends on historical and cultural context, and such dependence adds a unique character to any social innovation practice replicated to another socio-geographical area. The aspect of collectivity is noticed also by other authors who admit that viability and sustainability of social innovation depends strongly on collective construction of it (Fridhi, 2021). Recently, the pattern of investigation has been moved from studying the individual heroic efforts and individual capacities (e.g., Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Gruber & Wallace, 1999; Policastro & Gardner, 1999 as cited in Mumford, 2020), towards a direction of studying interconnected individuals, as an underlying engine of social innovation.

All the above definitions contain valuable information from the perspective of this dissertation. However, considering my empirical research, I would like to propose my own definition, which captures the essence of what turned out to be extremely important - the way in which social innovations are designed and

organized. In this doctoral dissertation *social innovation is understood as alternative ways of doing, organizing, mixing, or shaping. It is produced in collective, reflective, and inclusive process, aimed at addressing unmet needs or social challenges, but without compromising the common interest of a society.* The definition combines the reasoning of previously mentioned authors. It involves the aspect of collectivity from Cajaiba-Santana's definition (further developed in this dissertation) and includes the novelty of social innovation practice captured by Hexeltine et al. (2016). Instead of describing the outcomes of social innovation, I rather focus on the methods of creation, because the future is unknown, while the methods of organizing can be a subject of analysis and improvement.

2.1.2 THE ECOSYSTEM OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Social innovation ecosystem is a system of connected vessels, which includes both the initiatives introducing an innovating practice, it's agents and stakeholders. The ecosystem is diverse and complex. Therefore, the concept of social innovation might be confusing. In a **political debate**, examples of social innovation can be distinguished in variety of fields. Moulaert and MacCallum (2019) fall into the following categories:

- "Entrepreneurship in social economy.
- The use of technologies in delivering social services and/or addressing social ills.
- Social networking approaches to addressing or opening new markets.
- Socially responsible investment and/or marketing.
- Reorganization of the public sector.
- Economic renewal through new industries in socially deprived locales

- Participatory democracy in the governance of organizations.
- Attention to the social processes underlying new developments (in technology, management, production, service delivery, and so on).
- Budling respect, sympathy, and compassion for human beings in all their diversity “(Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019, p. 3).

The authors underline that none of the above categories is exclusive, social innovation can emerge in any environment or context. What is meaningful, is its ethical framing in terms of the process and outcomes. Social innovation is therefore recognized by “its potential in a social realm” (Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019, p. 3).

Social innovations address social, environmental, political, and economical issues worldwide in almost all the countries. Social needs and challenges, which are addressed by initiatives, differ significantly. The quantitative study has revealed the **most common areas of practice** in which social innovations perform. It is education and lifelong learning, poverty and sustainable development, employment, health and social care, transport and mobility, energy supply, environment, and climate change (Howaldt, Kaletka & Schröder, 2016). The table below presents the research results with more details about the fields of practice in which social innovation is present.

Table 2 Fields of social innovation practice within political categories.

<i>Fields of social innovation practice</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING	178
Reduction of educational disadvantages	
New learning arrangements, interactive education	
Entrepreneurship education and promotion	
Alternative forms of educational activities and training	
New strategies and structures of lifelong learning	
Occupational orientation, early pupils career planning	
New digital and virtual learning environments	
Quality improvements, setting of new educational standards	
POVERTY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	140
Disadvantage, vulnerability, discrimination	
Lack of integrated support for the poor or excluded	
Sub-standard or dangerous accommodation	
Inadequate financial resources	
Un-nutritious or unhealthy food	
Unemployment or underemployment	
Inadequate good quality work	
Place-specific poverty or exclusion	
EMPLOYMENT	136
Job search support and matching	
Training and education	
Social entrepreneurship	
Workplace innovation and organizational innovation	
Working conditions and working environment	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	96
New models of care	
E-health, m-health	
Shift in care location	
Integrated care delivery	
ENERGY SUPPLY	74
Energy collectives	
Providing examples and inspiration	
Energy services	
Local (domestic) production of energy	
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMET CHANGE	72
Alternative sustainable food production and distribution	
Protection and restoring of ecosystem and biodiversity	
Re-use and recycling	

Source: Own elaboration based on Howaldt, J., Kaletka, C., Schröder, A., Rehfeld, D., & Terstriep, J. (2016). *Mapping the World of Social Innovation Key Results of a Comparative Analysis of 1.005 Social Innovation Initiatives at a Glance. Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change*. European Public & Social Innovation Review

The above overview of social innovation practice confirms that social innovations emerge in diverse fields of socio-economical realm and have a broad impact.

Initiatives classified as social innovations take various legal forms, they can be a foundation, a cooperative or an enterprise in which commercial activity finance the social activity – the form should serve the function of initiatives. However, what is unequivocally stated, is that social innovation is not about maximizing profits, but about **maximizing social impact**. It is the measurements of impact that determine the effectiveness of social innovation. Moreover, the success of innovation is perceived as the **ability to diffuse**, i.e., the replication or scalability of solutions (hence the common openness to knowledge sharing). The most iconic social innovations are microfinance and education – these are “game-changing initiatives which have traveled well beyond their original geographical and social contexts to find permanent institutional homes in the public services of many countries” (Moulaert et al., 2013, p. 1). Diffusion also applies to norms and rules or ways of behaving that social innovations spread, such as caring for the natural environment. Therefore, there are numerous practices (such as recycling) that fit into the global narrative on the environment, and are associated with the developed standards of conduct, such as waste segregation.

The social innovation ecosystem is characterized by a **high level of innovation and creativity**, which defines the dynamics of work and organizational culture. On the one hand, social innovation grew on the experience and knowledge of the NGO sector and social movements. On the other hand, social innovation draws on the achievements of innovative economy and market tools, what moves it a bit closer to start-ups. For example, the organization Tech to the Rescue recognizes and develops the potential of existing technology in solving major social challenges and deals with combining social innovation with relevant technologies (<https://www.techtotherescue.org>). It is an example of social

innovation strongly based on building new relationships. Moreover, social innovation initiatives, when developing alternative ways of approaching challenges or needs, develop the ideas in a creative processes and experimentation. Lorini et al. (2022) noticed in projects conducted in marginalized communities that “the processes are born from limited resources, developed by collectivity of people, managed through flexible approaches, and driven by community needs” (p. 11). The process of testing and modifying seems to be an element of most of the social innovation. The element of experimenting is related to reflexivity, it enables the learning and improving (Ulug & Horlings, 2019). Learning through experimenting leads to improvements in the spheres otherwise unnoticed. As the study of urban gardens shows, participants learn farming from others through the practice, therefore there is no need to be experienced in farming before joining the community (Ulug & Horlings, 2019). In order to join the initiative, it is not essential to have expert knowledge on a given topic, but rather social and learning skills. Therefore, the very process of producing alternative solutions to social challenges is creative and nonlinear.

Social innovation practice provides new tools and methods of impacting and shaping social reality, which are available to civil society and market. The field gains much attention and becomes ubiquitous concept, therefore the budgets of some of the initiatives are surprisingly high (Howaldt, Kaletka & Schröder, 2016). It is a positive effect, which brings a perspective for further development of this field.

2.1.3 THE ORIGINS AND OUTCOMES OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

There are two main directions of implementing the social innovation. First are a bottom-up, grassroots initiatives, which emerge from the civil society or from an

individual level (e.g., urban farming). Second are top-down innovations that are initiated and coordinated by actors of governmental structures (e.g., parental leave) (Diniz et al., 2014). Both origins of social innovation bring meaningful results to the society.

The most promising geographical places for initiating transformative social innovations are considered **urban areas** because of its heterogeneity and accessibility of resources (Skrzypczak, 2016). Urban social innovations have a regenerative role. Regeneration means improving the conditions of living and well-being in neighborhoods, which are at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Anechitei, 2018), but it also means enabling new opportunities for society development. To construct a more inclusive and sustainable urban areas, the nine characteristics of social innovation are crucial: "networks, social relations, collaboration, social cohesion, satisfaction of human needs, improvements in quality of life, empowerment, sustainability, and scalability" (Anechitei, 2018, p. 2). Moreover, large cities serve as a perfect laboratory of ideas and solutions due to its heterogeneity and arrangements supporting innovativeness (Bauman et al., 2017). Such understanding of urban areas becomes a part of public policy and in many European cities have been established the so-called **laboratories of innovation**. "They are organizational units (managed by local authorities or non-government organizations contracted by the city) that design, test and scale social innovation within the framework of cross-sectoral cooperation" (Skrzypczak, 2020). Participants of such laboratories experiment *in vivo* to develop the innovation to a level corresponding to the needs and challenges.

Increasing number of social innovations emerge, and they „are gaining in importance not only in relation to social integration and equal opportunities, but also in respect to the innovative ability and future sustainability of society as a whole." (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2016, p. 1). For instance, social economy sees

social innovations as an important **trigger of economy development**, which develops the aspect of social at least as much as the prosperity of the market and leads to the future that enables humans fulfilling their potential, and provides a secure transition through life (Ionescu, 2015). According to the research of The Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA), there are three main categories of outcome in case of social innovations: 1) responding to social needs, which are not addressed by the systemic solutions or by the market, 2) approaching social challenges in an alternative ways and through new forms of social relations, 3) contributing to transformation towards more inclusive and participatory society “where empowerment and learning are both sources and outcomes of well-being” (BEPA 2010, p. 29). The categories of social innovation outcomes may overlap.

2.1.4 INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL INNOVATION

From an individual perspective, the important trigger for social innovation emergence, is a **motivation of social actors** to transform reality, which takes various forms. The empirical studies provide information, that initiatives emerge as a response to the lack of satisfaction of institutional arrangements, that prevent from meeting the basic human needs or the optimal development of societies (Moulaert, 2016). The Self Determination Theory (SDT) explains the intrinsic motivation to work on social innovation – it “suggests that SI initiatives become a viable project (in terms of attracting and maintaining membership) when they are able to provide a context, in which autonomous forms of motivation can be sustained over time, which entails supporting environments for the satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence” (Haxeltine, Jørgensen et al., 2016, p. 6). Autonomy refers to the possibility of choosing a personal path of development and acting according to

one's own values and sense of identity, relatedness means the feeling of being part of a larger group, and competence is the ability to act effectively in order to achieve the goals set for oneself (Bidee et al., 2013). The new members that join the community, may appreciate different aspects of social innovation than its initiators. For example, some people join a food cooperative only to have access to organic food, but it is not their motivation to work against the causes of the problem of access to food, such as the instrumentalization of farmers (Haxeltine, Jørgensen et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, social innovation is not a "one man show", but a result of collective effort. The **collective character** of social innovation is recognized by various researchers and considered important (Mumford, 2002; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Yañez-Figueroa et al., 2016). Social innovation in order to produce a social change and to effectively address social challenges, should be co-created by various stakeholders. The importance of co-creation is reflected in the story of Benjamin Franklin's (1706-1790) life and writings as described by Mumford (2002). Benjamin Franklin was the person who contributed to the emergence of public libraries. He stood behind the creation of the subscription library which provided a new pattern of access to books (Mumford, 2002). Franklin was an entrepreneur and political philosopher who had an activist drive too. He created a network of profit and non-profit enterprises that produced multiple social innovations. As Mumford (2002) described Franklin's achievements, he had a particular ability to network multiple individuals and engage them in working on inventions for social purpose. The value of collaboration and collective action was significant. „Initially, he obtained feedback concerning his ideas, often from his close associates in the Junto, apparently using this social feed-back both to refine and to extend his ideas while obtaining the elite investment leading to acceptance of, and support for, the idea under consideration. This initial "trial balloon," given acceptance and

support, was subsequently followed by an extensive and systematic persuasive effort intended to build a broader base of support” (Mumford, 2002, p. 263). **Co-creation** of an idea that led to support for it, was discovered as meaningful factor of social innovation emergence, next to the individual characteristic of Franklin - “the leader” with high skills in persuasive technics.

The collective character of social innovation today, is reflected in multi-actor collaboration on the process of social innovation emergence and implementation. It is present in the concept of community building (Wijk et al., 2018; Skrzypczak, 2016), governance (Nussbaumer & Moulaert, 2007), social innovation networks (Windrum et al., 2016), and collective action (Moulaert, 2014). All the above concepts are further developed in this dissertation.

2.1.5 MEANINGS GIVEN TO SOCIAL INNOVATION

In this sub-chapter I present a diversity of approaches that scholars take while researching social innovation. Scientific discussion is what legitimize the social practice, and therefore participate in co-creation of the field. Considering that “social action is guided by the meaning that individuals attach to their actions” (Ruiz, 2009, p. 6), it may be useful to see an overview of meanings given to social innovations.

Recently the interest in social innovation among scholars has significantly increased, which is measurable by the amount of published articles, and multiple scientific conferences that conferences that have been continuously organized in various countries (e.g. Challenge Social Innovation conference in September 2011 in Vienna, the Social Frontiers conference in November 2013 in London, the fourth international CRISES conference in Montreal in April 2014 or Social Innovation and Socio-Digital Transformation in Dortmund in 2019) taking place around the world (Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015).

The social innovation practices and actions are local and context dependent, while the social innovation discourse have a global character (Moulaert, 2009). Slee et al. (2021) divide the discourse into six narratives (categories):

1. **Bottom-up responses to neoliberalism**, means that social innovation is understood as collective action of civil society against neoliberal policies “which have curtailed the range of actions of the state and left human casualties in their wake” (Slee et al., 2021, p. 793). It is an endogenous reaction to constraints of market or politics (Swyngedouw, 2005; MacCallum et al.2009; Moulaert et al.2017; Horgan & Dimitrijević, 2018). It is often described as self-organizing of individuals, who act upon a common good of its participants and are value driven. Marginalized communities may be supported by other social actors. The opinions, on how capable of self-helping are the most disadvantaged actors vary (van den Hove et al.2012; OECD [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development], 2018).

2. **A virtuous and creative citizenry**, which “celebrates the empowered and creative citizen’s ability to address societal challenges through innovative collective action directed towards the delivery of public goods and/or social wellbeing of disadvantaged groups (virtuous citizenship)” (Slee et al., 2021, p. 795). It often relates to third sector and umbrella organizations supporting innovative initiatives. Here are also covered state level initiatives, rather innovative policies. Creativity of a citizen is here strongly emphasized (BEPA, 2011; Mulgan et al., 2007).

3. **The power of partnership** is the third category of social innovation discourse. It analyses the ways of partnering with authorities to better address social needs (Nicholls et al.,2015; Sørensen & Torfing, 2015; Lukesch, 2018). There are considered private-public or multi-actor partnerships. The civil society is viewed

as an active participant and co-creator of policies, or as a relatively passive receiver of consulted political strategies.

4. **Social enterprise and entrepreneurship as drivers of social innovations in society.** Such approach is most common in North America and Canada. Often published in the Stanford Social Innovation Review or researched by Waterloo Institute of Social Innovation and Resilience (e.g., Westley & Antadze, 2010). Also present in Europe, where the studies provide a rich information on institutional support available to social entrepreneurship (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008, 2010).

5. **The resolution of grand societal challenges** is a role often assigned to social innovation. The research explains various available tools to engage with wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Elia & Margherita, 2018). Within the discourse is localized the transformative role of social innovation (Jimenez & Morales, 2011; European Commission, 2013; Unger, 2015; Haxeltine et al., 2016; Avelino et al., 2017, 2019)

6. **Uncivil civil society** is a category of discourse related to innovative forms of protests and vigilantism, that use new communication technology. Nevertheless, it is questionable if the innovative is social activism or the communication technology (Slee et al., 2021)

The scientific discussion on social innovations is interdisciplinary, thanks to which the understanding of the phenomenon of social innovations is deeper and broader. To the above overview I would add a category of **prefigurative social movement**, which gains some attention among scholars. It suggests that social innovation indicates the directions of change through discussing the future and acting in the present (Monticelli, 2018). Moreover, according to Franz, Hochgerner & Howaldt (2012, p. 380) "The new, innovation paradigm is

essentially characterized by the opening of the innovation process to society. Alongside companies, universities and research institutes, citizens and customers become relevant actors of innovation processes (...). Innovation becomes a general social phenomenon and increasingly influences all walks of life". To enable transition towards sustainable and just society, the widespread, interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration is crucial.

2.2 INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

The institutional theory provides a theoretical framework for the dissertation. It provides the tools and language to discuss the processes of change taking place in societies, economies, and politics. In the chapter, I specify the institutional perspective of the dissertation and locate the construct of social innovation within its institutional context. I describe the multidimensional institutional environment, and point to the fact, that institutions are experienced in a subjective way, which means that some spheres of social policy, economy or market cannot be successfully designed without reaching for the experience of individuals. Such perspective highlights the advantages of including social innovation in a process of transformation towards more sustainable models of society. Social innovations, which in principle are participatory and co-created, provide mechanisms that enable reaching for the experience of individuals, learning about the nature of social issues, and developing solutions that meet the social needs and limitations.

In the chapter I discuss the pace and scope of social change, as well the exogenous and endogenous factors of change that influence the social innovation ecosystem. Moreover, I summarize the mechanisms of

institutionalization described in a literature, to further distinguish those used by social innovators.

I describe the micro dynamics of institutional change, which reflect the idea that individuals and organizations are not passive receivers of institutional arrangements, but actively participate in the process of shaping it. I continue developing the micro perspective by discussing the mechanisms of norms emergence on a local level – it is within the groups and communities. As I have mentioned before, the research in the area of transition (which was previously focused on political level of transformation), have been recently refocusing to the local scale – the implementation of policy in action (Köhler et al., 2021). Scholars have noticed that "concrete actions that initiate and develop transitions are implemented in a local context" (Köhler et al., 2021, p. 1), what means that local communities can support or constrain the transition, and it is crucial to evolve participatory models of shaping the change. Considering the local dimension of transformation, as well the local character of social innovation, I find reasonable to introduce those mechanisms of norms emergence that appear between people and during interactions.

2.2.1 MULTIFACETED INSTITUTIONS

Institutions are differently defined, depending on the perspective of analysis. At their most basic „Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction“ (North, 1990, p. 3). The formal institutions are rules and regulations given by e.g., authorities, and informal are the patterns of behaviors, consisting of beliefs, customs and interpersonal rules.

The role of an institutions is to structure human interactions within social, political, and economic system (North, 1990, p. 3), and to simplify the exchange

between individuals and social activity. Institutions provide stability, reduce the transaction costs, and simplify interpersonal relations and activities within a social system (North, 1990).

The character of **institutions is a moot topic** - whether the structures shape actions of social actors, or whether the actors shape the structures. The advocates of institutional theory did not intent to unify the theory or decide who is right or wrong (Czarniawska, 2014), instead, there was left a space for diversity of social research. In a response to “new institutionalism” emergence in 1990s, Hall and Taylor (1996) have summarized the three dominating analytical approaches within a theory:

1) the historical institutionalism,

2) rational choice institutionalism, and 3) sociological institutionalism.

1) The historical approach is influenced by structural functionalists. Institution is mostly associated with organization, while rules and conventions are generated by formal organizations. The political economy is considered here as the strongest factor shaping collective behavior, not any longer as a neutral broker among competing interests (Evans et al., 1985 as cited in Hall & Taylor, 1996). North (1990) has proved that there were times and places, in which institutional arrangements have accelerated development, or caused stagnation. The state is not ambivalent, it has a direct impact on the social actors, it may constrain or enable the social activity and exchange.

2) The rational choice institutionalism, Hall and Taylor (1996) named a “curiosity” of political science at the time, that presents the politics as a series of collective action dilemmas. The social actors are considered rationales with fixed preferences, who act to maximize their profits.

3) The last approach is sociological institutionalism. Its representants (like Dobbin, Meyer & Scott as cited in Hall & Taylor, 1996) have argued, that the shape of institutions and organizations depend on processes related to cultural practices transmission. They defined institutions more broadly, not only as formal rules and norms, but as a complex system consisting of "symbol systems, cognitive scripts, moral templates that provide the frames of meaning guiding human interactions" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 947).

Hall and Taylor (1996) have claimed that different approaches in institutional theory, reflect different interests of analysis, and in fact are complementary, not mutually exclusive.

The contemporary constructivist paradigm explains that **institutions are socially constructed**. Institution is a system of constitutive rules (Searle, 2010), which are mostly shaped through ordinary interactions and everyday practice. One of the most recent definitions explains institutions as the „collective practices, which are repeated, with a time taken-for-granted, and strengthened by normative justification, that supposedly gains a shared understanding" (Czarniawska, 2014, p. 7). Moreover, institutions have an **experiential character**. They are "sustained, altered, and extinguished, as they are enacted by individuals in concrete social situations" (Powell & Colyvas, 2008). These are the rules in practice that enable the self-reproduction of social order (Greenwood et al., 2008). Institutions emerge as a result of lived, embodied knowledge rather than discursive knowledge (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Giddens, 1984), which often has a form of taken-for-granted rules, norms and beliefs (Suchman, 1995; Scott, 2001). Therefore, they are structured and transmitted in the "intense subjectivity of immediate experience" (Rathunde 2001, p.140). The "immediate experience" is what cause the great inertia of institutions, therefore to certain extent, institutions resist change. It is because institutions are often exercised without

reflection, based on habits and beliefs (Lawrence et al., 2006), what results with path dependence. Tradition, culture, and political order is a firmly fixed system of beliefs that tends to resist change (Amis, Munir & Mair, 2017). The difficulty in overcoming schemes increases with the language poor in alternatives, but full of terms that reinforce the current status-quo. Nevertheless, the great inertia of institutions simultaneously provides a space for its negotiations (Nilsson, 2016), what will be further elaborated in the chapter dedicated to experiential surfacing and learning.

Organizational perspective describes the institutional environment as an “**institutional infrastructure**”, which enables the operation of enterprises and society. By a definition it is “the set of political, legal, and cultural institutions (Boettke, 1994), that form the backdrop for economic activity and governance, enabling (or constraining) its smooth operation. These elements overlap, reinforce one another, and may sometimes substitute for one another” (Hinings, Logue & Zietsman, 2017, p. 173). According to Hinings, Logue and Zietsman (2017), the main elements of institutional infrastructure include categories, labels and norms, formal governance, research centers, collective interest organizations, informal governance, field configuring events (FCEs) and organizational models or templates. Within FCEs are „trade shows, festivals, tournaments, ceremonies and rituals, accreditations exercises, rankings and conferences” that shapes the directions of development of innovations, markets, and professions (Greenwood, et al., 2017, p. 2).

The following dissertation represents the perspective, that the formal and informal regulations, structures, and social actors, are mutually reinforcing environments that co-shape each other and institutions. The better is organized

the space for mutual shaping, the more effective are both - institutional arrangements and actions of actors.

To social innovation research, institutional theory provides opportunity of analysis on three levels - micro, meso, and macro (Wijk et al., 2018). Micro level represents the embedded individuals who are empowered by participating in social innovation. Meso level describes the processes of negotiations between empowered actors, who can collectively shape the "structures, patterns and beliefs that constitute their social worlds" and co-create alternative proto-institutions (Wijk et al., 2018, p. 5). Finally, the macro level analyze the ways in which institutional environment enables or constrains the efforts of social innovation actors (Wijk et al., 2018).

2.2.2 DIMENSIONS AND TRIGGERS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Institutional change became a central focus of the organizational studies when the new institutionalism emerged, around 1990 (Dacin et al., 2002; Greenwood et al., 2008). It is defined as "a difference in form, quality or state over time in an institution" (Van de Ven & Hargrave, 2004, p. 261). Institutional change is always fraught with costs and uncertainty, and there are multiple factors causing the resistance to change, e.g., the power relation dynamics (Munck af Rosenschöld et al., 2014) or mentioned before the great inertia. There are also multiple triggers of change of exogenous or endogenous character, therefore, change occurs in diverse **pace and scope**. The revolutionary pace is triggered by challenge, disruption, or conflict, while the evolutionary is triggered by slow societal action – so called "pragmatic collaboration" (Micelotta et al., 2017). The change which happens as the improvements, relatively narrow alteration, "stretching rather than discarding institutionalized arrangements" (p. 1886), is developmental. The type of change which involves replacing, blending, or

segregating institutional logics, is transformational (Micelotta, et al., 2017), as it transforms not only arrangements but also beliefs and habits. Hargrave and Van de Ven (2006) proposed four modes of institutional change: the institutional design, institutional adaptation, institutional diffusion, and collective action. "Each model provides an internally consistent account of institutional change but addresses different questions or aspects of institutional change and relies on a different generating mechanism to explain change" (Hargrave, & van de Ven, 2006).

Tang (2012) systematizes the knowledge on institutional change according to the two dominating paradigms – of the **harmony and of the conflict**. There are three main assumptions in the harmony paradigm (Tang, 2012, p.11): first, among agents there is "a general harmony of interest, or, at least, more common interest than conflict of interest." Second, agents favor „cooperative and coordinative behavior to resolve their conflicts" over competitive and forceful behaviors. Third, „most social outcomes are produced by agents' cooperative and coordinative behavior to resolve their conflict of interest and improve their private welfare (and thus, often, their collective welfare too)". Therefore, institutional change is seen as a collective effort of multiple actors, who basically are not in conflict. Contrary, the paradigm of conflict provides other claims - "First, agents generally have divergent interests. As such, agents often have conflict of interest – mostly real but sometimes imagined – among them. Second, agents often resort to actual conflictual behavior (not necessarily violent but often so) – that is, quarrel, passive resistance, struggle, threat of force, and actual use of force to advance their interests. Third and following from the first two assumptions, most social outcomes – even desirable social outcomes (in hindsight) – are produced by agents' resorting to actual conflict to settle their differences rather than by their cooperation and coordination toward collective gains" (Tang, 2012, p.11). The author further explains that harmony and conflict

are specific cases of a general theory of change, and there is a universal motivation for agents to promote institutional change – “**self-interested search for happiness**” (Tang, 2012, p. 43). It is an imperative that provoke individuals to action (when they seek for change), or to learning (when they adapt to a change). The search for happiness is explained, in the conflict paradigm, as an engine of human.

The new institutional theory has brought the idea that organizations are not passive receivers of institutional arrangements, but they are capable of shaping institutional environment (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004; Purik & Arenas, 2017). The famous work of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) have strongly impacted organizational studies by an observation of the “iron cage”, the phenomenon of isomorphism within organizational fields. The perspectives of adaption of institutions reflects the assumption that “institutional environmental pressures (...) shape the structure and actions of organizational actors” (Hargrave & van de Ven, 2006). Nevertheless, DiMaggio has cleared that organizations are not vulnerable to institutional arrangements, and five years after „the iron cage“ has introduced the perspective of agency - **institutional entrepreneurship** (DiMaggio, 1988). The perspective explains that organizations are not passive recipients of institutional pressures. Institutional entrepreneur is a powerful and skilled actor with sufficient resources. DiMaggio have called for research on agency and creativity of organizations reflecting on their environment. The image of an entrepreneur was significantly developed. Mair and Marti (2009) have enumerated the entrepreneurial skills which are the success factors in pursuit of interest:

- 1) social skills, e.g., brokering, framing, and agenda setting (Fligstein, 2001);
- 2) political skills, e.g., networking, bargaining, interest mediation (Garud et al., 2002);

3) and cultural skills, e.g., the use of symbolic language, analogies, and rhetorical devices (Campbell, 2004).

The skills and tools developed by institutional entrepreneurs, can be used by social innovators to negotiate institutional arrangements more effectively.

Institutional pressures are successful only to the degree, to which internal and external participants of the process believe in it (Suddaby et al., 2020). Nevertheless, researchers suggest, that not without the meaning are the opportunities available to social actors, which are dependent on institutional, political, and social environment (Mair & Marti, 2009). Moreover, Powell and Colyvas (2008) suggested that institutionalization requires more analysis of everyday processes e.g., identity emergence, sense making, typifications or frames, and “the mediating role of language, interaction, rituals, and categories” (p. 26), to better understand the bottom-up institutional processes. The type of informal institutions that emerge from such processes are strongly engaged in shaping the social order and institutional arrangements. The challenge of embedded agency is particularly constraining for the marginalized groups whose opportunities are limited. The fact is that in the process of shaping or negotiating change, there is represented only a **self-interest of those social actors, who are involved** in it, in other words, those who are marginalized or excluded do not participate in the process. Neither participate children or those who are not born yet, even though they are the heirs of changes boganned today (Bauman, 2012). They are future beneficiaries of today’s idea of change and progress. Bauman (2012) questions the dominant understanding of progress (as it is not serving the whole society or the human species anymore) and explains its dominance through the relation of power. According to the author, the power at the global level has drained from politics. “The growing volume of power that matters (that is, the kind of power that has, if not the final

say, then at least the major and, in the end, decisive influence on the setting of options open to agents 'choice) has already turned global; but politics has remained as local as before" (p. 52). Bauman (2012) suggests the incapability of current socio-political system to address the social needs and aims, and the need for alternative solutions. Social innovation initiatives, often play an empowering role, by including the marginalized groups in the process of shaping and negotiating change. For example, social innovation laboratories or centers of local activity, provide a space for mixing different social actors and groups, accelerate networking and learning, and increase the social capital of individuals (Skrzypczak, 2016). It is one of the ideas to design politics in a participatory manner, and to include a self-interest of excluded social actors.

Harries (2012) enumerated five **triggers of change**: institutional entrepreneurship, external shocks (jolts), competing institutional logics, and structural overlap, means blurring boundaries between sectors and enabling new actors into the process. Another category is the **institutional work**, means "intentional actions of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining or destroying institutions" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). The literature describes a variety of actions that result with a change:

- Mobilizing (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006; Wijen & Ansari, 2007);
- Bridging (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011);
- Partaking, convening (Dorado, 2005) or mixing groups of interest (Skrzypczak, 2020);
- Bricolage (Garud & Karnøe, 2003);
- Identity work (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010);
- Networking (Szarleta, 2017);
- Experiential surfacing (Nilsson, 2015);

- Boundary work and practice work (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010);
- Framing contests (Skrzypczak, 2020);
- Narrating and storytelling (Zilber, 2007);
- Discourse problematization (Maguire & Hardy, 2009);
- Translation (Czarniawska & Sevón (2005);
- Repair (Heaphy, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013);
- Resistance (Marti & Fernandez, 2013).

The selected actions will be described in the context of social innovation in the chapter dedicated to its transformative role.

2.2.3 GROUP NORMS - EMERGENCE AND MAINTENANCE

Institutional work starts as early as an idea to intentionally create, maintain or destroy institution (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) emerge, and becomes a subject of discussion within a group of individuals. Therefore, the shape of message transmitted during institutional work is strongly dependent on the quality of interaction and communication within a group of interest or community. For the purpose of this research, I suggest lingering a little longer at this point, and look carefully at the process of negotiating norms at the group level.

The emergence of group norms is a conditioned process (Feldman, 1984). The author introduced 4 groups of conditions:

(1) "Norms are likely to be enforced if they facilitate group survival" (p. 48).

Norms related to task maintenance and social maintenance, are enforced in a group, in order to minimize the risk of failure and maximize the possibility of success.

(2) "Norms are likely to be enforced if they simplify, or make predictable, what behavior is expected of group members" (p. 48).

The condition is related to social behaviors. As an example, the author explains, that roles emergence in the group, are "simply expectations that are shared by group members regarding who is to carry out what types of activities under what circumstances" (Bales & Slater, 1955 as cited in Fieldman, 1984).

(3) "Norms are likely to be enforced if they help the group avoid embarrassing interpersonal problems" (p. 49).

The purpose of this rule is to avoid conflicts and awkwardness.

4) "Norms are likely to be enforced if they express the central values of the group and clarify what is distinctive about the group's identity" (p. 49).

Ostrom (2000) provides a complementary conditions of norms adaption, depending on whether participation in the group is voluntary or not, and whether the standards are imposed top-down (e.g., by the authority) or created by the community bottom-up. Empirical evidence shows that communities that make decisions independently have a much lower rate of violation of norms (Ostrom, 2000). It is related to dynamics within a network. Reputation and acceptance of a group has a strong impact on individuals' behaviors.

In 1965 Olson has challenged the basic assumption of democracy, that societies can work collectively towards achieving a common good. In his well-known and often cited paper "The logic of collective action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups", Olson claimed that "Unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests" (p. 2). The theory was called

“zero contribution thesis” and gained a significant popularity across various scientific disciplines. Only in late 90s it was questioned by Elinor Ostrom, who proved its failure, as a general theory of collective action. Olson’s argumentation is based on the theory of rational choice, and assumption that individuals constantly calculate costs and benefits of a certain action, and they are rational. In “Zero contribution thesis” the author illustrates, that if all the group members will act upon their personal interest (which is perceived here as not complementary with a group interest), then achieving a common good would not be possible. Moreover, if someone cannot be excluded from reaping the benefits of some resource or action, then he or she does not have any motivation to work for producing those benefits (Olson, 1965). The theory was not confirmed by empirical studies, neither by experiments, which when repeated, have explained that group behavior of individuals depends on the past behaviors of others, while rational egoist in a public good game would have always remained focused on self-interest. Multiple observations, interviews and experiments conducted in the field have shown the opposite - individuals in a group, by the rule, have a will to cooperate (Ostrom, 2000). “Rational egoist” or “Free rider”, the opportunistic individual who only benefits and does not participate in costs or efforts, is a marginal example. It is a type of person possibly present in every group, however extrapolating it as a behavioral norm of all social actors, is misleading and mistaken. Therefore, Ostrom (2000) creates a term „norm-using players“, to describe individuals who are willing to undertake cooperative activities. Norm-using players can be divided into two groups:

1. Conditional cooperators - “individuals who are willing to initiate cooperative action when they estimate others will reciprocate and to repeat these actions as long as a sufficient proportion of the others involved reciprocate” (Ostrom, 2000, p. 140).

2. Willing punishers - "type of player who is willing, if given an opportunity, to punish presumed free riders through verbal rebukes or to use costly material payoffs when available. Willing punishers may also become willing rewarders if the circle of relationships allows them to reward those who have contributed more than the minimal level" (Ostrom, 2000, p. 140).

According to Ostrom (1990) it is important to develop a system for monitoring members to sanction the violators of rules, however it is crucial that the system is invented and accepted by a group or community members. Moreover, the rules of community should be recognized and respected by outside authorities. The system of sanctioning can convince the less trusting individuals to become committed cooperators.

In many spheres of social life, individuals "voluntarily organize themselves so as to gain the benefits of trade, to provide mutual protection against risk, and to create and enforce rules that protect natural resources" (Ostrom, 2000). However, the metaphoric version of zero contribution thesis, has penetrated the political and managerial discourse, as well the sphere of secular knowledge, and became a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. As a metaphor, simplified and detached from the specificity of conducted study, "zero contribution thesis" brings a pessimistic vision that people lack agency, they are not capable of acting together or are vulnerable against social challenges and issues as groups and societies. The metaphor has a relatively strong position in social memory. Hardin (1968) has illustrated an example of such "tragedy of the commons", by describing a situation, when people have an open access to a resource, but act independently according to their interest, and therefore do not serve the common good. It is worth underlying here, that Hardin's theory was based on "hypothetical example of the effects of unregulated grazing on common land"

imagined by William Foster Lloyd over hundred years before. It was a rhetorical device, not a fact.

Presence of “zero contribution thesis” can be noticed in policy and textbooks, where the lack of social trust is determining the methods of policy making (Ostrom, 2000). However social reality brings multiple examples of non-compulsory cooperation for the common good, e.g., voting in elections. Motivation to play by the rules or violate them, have internal character, means that it rather depends on personal judgements than on any exogenous coercion (Ostrom, 2003). Moreover, people have greater or lesser predisposition to cooperate and achieve the benefits from collective action and it is a result of various conditions, like cultural background.

Ostrom (1997) suggests creating and testing behavioral models, that enable or not cooperation within groups. It is an indication for further collection of data in order to produce a new general behavioral model, which does meet the complexity of human’s behavior. Such new model would include variety of factors impacting cooperation (Ostrom, 1997; Grodzicki, 2015):

- Initial occurrence in a group of cooperating people
- Communication opportunities, when a group can collectively work on tasks planning, setting goals, and inventing sanctioning mechanisms.
- Interactions that lead to increased trust, shaping mutual expectation, strengthening norms and shared identity development.

The high level of trust between members of the group reduce uncertainty and fosters effective cooperation. Trust is developed based on previous experience of cooperation. It may be increased by credibility of individuals, dense social

networks, and the existence of institutional rules (Ostrom & Ahn, 2007). The role of interactions was described already in the old institutionalism by J. Commons as the "transactions". The author explained that mutual exchange between participants of an interaction, leads to internalization of new experience into an overall knowledge on social norms. It is a learning process by which the behavior of individuals is changed because of the influence of the context on them. In the empirical research of social innovation were identified "interactive spaces" (e.g. experimental labs or relational spaces), which allows different actors to share perspectives and collaborate on new ideas and structures (van Wijk, Zietsma, Dorado, Bakker & Marti, 2018). Moreover, "herding spaces" which enables generation of emotional encouragement for the community of social innovation (Purtik & Arenas, 2017). The engagement of emotions in co-creation processes, may produce a reflexive awareness among the participants. The intentional practice of involving emotions into everyday work was studied by Nilsson and Paddock (2013) and named "inscaping".

Norms within communities emerge toward achieving a collective identity, as it is a glue for individuals acting together. Identity "involves an act of perception and construction as well as the discovery of preexisting bonds, interests, and boundaries. It is fluid and relational, emerging out of interactions with several different audiences (bystanders, allies, opponents, news media, state authorities), rather than fixed. It channels words and actions, enabling some claims and deeds but delegitimizing others. It provides categories by which individuals divide up and make sense of the social world" (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 298). In communities the so-called tactical coalitions are constructed, which enable self-defining and self-expressing within a wider group (Percy-Smith & Matthews, 2001). It is meaningful, because individuality and community building are complementary mechanisms that shape the very same person (Naumiuk, 2021). Such dualism is of value, both for human development and for

social innovation, as it enables creativity, confidence and relationships strengthening.

Yu, et al. (2013) claim that „due to the expense and inefficiency of having a centralized policing enforcer to formulate and specify social norms in a prescriptive manner, it is more desirable to enable social norms to evolve and emerge on their own, without relying on any centralized authority“ (p. 446). The authors conducted quantitative study to discover conditionings of collective norm creation in society, in which they proved that “collective learning is able to evolve a norm much faster than the pairwise learning“ (p. 477).

Shared norms within a community enable managing a common good of a group. Nevertheless, the emergence of norms and effective use of it, is a conditioned process. Ostrom (1997) suggests conducting empirical research that will reveal the information about such factors.

2.3 TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL INNOVATION – THE CONCEPT AND MECHANISMS

Social innovation plays an increasingly significant role in the transformation processes towards more sustainable models of production and consumption, and towards fair distribution of income and resources (Howaldt, Kopp & Schwarz, 2015). Howaldt and Schwarz (2016) suggest that it is necessary to build an interdisciplinary theory, which reflects the real potential of social innovation, covers its diversity, and explains its multiple dimensions. Recently, the authors like Avelino et al. (2019); Westley et al. (2016) and Howaldt et al. (2015), have researched social innovation from a perspective of its transformative role, means the possibilities of initiating social change in a desired direction.

Transformation caused by social innovation is a “process in which social relations, involving new ways of doing, organizing, framing and/or knowing, challenge, alter and/or replace established (and/or dominant) institutions in a specific social-material context” (Haxeltine, Avelino, et al., 2016, p. 19). The process described above is further developed as follows:

- “To ‘challenge’ refers to questioning the legitimacy or existence of dominant institutions (as ways of doing, organizing, framing, and knowing).
- to ‘alter’ refers to changing and/or supplementing (parts of) dominant institutions.
- to ‘replace’ refers to replacing (parts of) dominant institution(s) with new institutions”. (Haxeltine, Avelino, et al., 2016, p. 19)

It is therefore the aim of social innovation to challenge the taken for granted institutions (whenever they cause or support a social problem), and to provide ideas about alternative patterns of doing things. Questioning enables noticing some systemic or structural failures and rising the awareness of it. The criticism opens a space for discussion and development of innovations in the field recognized as worth improving. Institutions, in the theory of social innovation, can be “altered” or “replaced” in order to meet social goals defined in a bottom-linked, participatory process of social innovating. The new patterns of doing things, the new norms and rules, are by a definition the products of social innovations.

According to Avelino et al. (2019) there are different dimensions of social transformation that overlap and interfere. These are social innovation, system innovation, game-changers, and narratives of change - the “shades of innovation and change”. The definition of each shade is described in the table below.

Table 3 Dimensions of social change related to innovation.

4 dimensions of change and innovation	Definitions
Social innovation	Change in social relations, involving new ways of doing, organizing, knowing and framing.
System innovation	Change at the level of societal sub-systems, including institutions, social structures, and physical infrastructures.
Game-changers	Macro-developments that are perceived to change the (rules, fields and players) "game" of societal interaction.
Narratives of change	Discourses on change and innovation, i.e. sets of ideas, concepts, metaphors, and/or story-lines about change and innovation.

Source: Own elaboration based on Avelino, F., Wittmayer, J. M., Pel, B., Weaver, P., Dumitru, A., Haxeltine, A., Kemp, R., Jørgensen, M. S., Bauler, T., Ruijsink, S., & O’Riordan, T. (2019). Transformative social innovation and (dis)empowerment. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 145, 195-206.

The authors claim that different dimensions of change have a coevolutionary character, and are based on understanding that “these are connected, partly overlapping and diffuse processes” (Avelino, et al. 2019, p. 196). Transformation is therefore a “journey” across time and space that requires collaboration of actors from diversified sectors.

The cross-sector collaboration might be difficult because it involves multiple institutional logics. The logics can be categorized and visualized with examples, as follows:

- The state (public agencies): politician, policymaker, bureaucrat, citizen, voter.
- The market (firm, business): producer, consumer, employer, employee, client, entrepreneur.

- The community: households, families, residents, neighbors, family members, friends (Avelino & Wittmayer, 2016).

Individuals often play multiple roles, they may belong to different institutional logics simultaneously (Thornton et al., 2012). The logics may be mixed during social innovation process, and mutual understanding improved. As a result, relations between actors may shift. Enacting new interpersonal relationships is one of transformational purposes of social innovation. It is creating a space for individuals to meet and understand each other's perspectives (Skrzypczak, 2016). Olson et al. (2017) suggest, that to understand fully the large-scale environmental transformation, the process should be studied at the level of human-environmental interactions.

It is worth underlying the importance of co-engagement of different sectors in the process of transformation. Therefore, social innovation should be "prescribed" as a cure for major global challenges, especially in the programs of social policy. Avelino and Wittmayer (2016) criticized the narrative of authorities - The Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA), who claimed that "at a time of major budgetary constraints, social innovation is an effective way of responding to social challenges, by mobilizing people's creativity to develop solutions and make better use of scarce resources" (BEPA, 2010, p.7). Social innovation is not a medicine for austerity policies (Avelino & Wittmayer, 2016). It should not shift the responsibility for the social welfare away from the government towards citizens. This kind of narrative is misleading and suggests that isolated practice can solve major social issues, while the transformation takes place at various levels, and social innovation must be a part of a bigger whole and collective effort.

Social innovations often emerge where there is an institutional void - "where institutional arrangements that support markets are absent, weak, or fail to

accomplish the role expected of them” (Mair & Marti, 2009). Operating within such space is challenging and requires intersectoral collaborations and strong networks. The challenge for any type of innovation that fills a niche is the availability of institutional infrastructure and formal arrangements to support and legalize the practice.

Transformative role of social innovation is analyzed at various levels. From a perspective of political studies, the object of research is a bottom-linked governance. It is a step towards more inclusive policy, stressing participatory practices and interactive relationships between civil society and authorities (Moulaert et.al, 2019). Social science explains that it is collective action, what triggers new institutions emergence, it covers analysis of communities and networks (Ostrom, 1997, 2000; Skrzypczak, 2016, Polańska, 2020). Individualistic approach explains the role of empowerment caused by social innovation (Martí & Mair, 2009).

It is difficult to say which came first, the chicken or the egg - whether the public debate on change comes first, or the invention of one alternative practice comes first. For practical reasons, I assume in the following subchapters that social innovation grows from the local action of a group of people who, in the process of disseminating norms, rules and new patterns of doing things, grows into a community, then buds by establishing networks, and increases its range and efficiency through governance and discourse development. Below I describe the most characteristic mechanisms (or categories of actions, behaviors, and structures) that enable social innovation to evolve and cause a social change.

2.3.1 EXPERIENTIAL SURFACING AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The great inertia of institutions is caused by a very experiential character of it, which means that institutions are often exercised without reflection, based on

habits and beliefs and therefore resist the change (Lawrence et al., 2006). However, the experiential space can be used to negotiate the same institutions. Surfacing and discussing perception of norms, rules, beliefs and relationship patterns create a situation, when they are not taken for granted any more. Experiencing provides another type of knowledge, which is complementary to cognition and is necessary to meet the complexity of social reality (Kolb, 1984).

Experiential surfacing is a social structuring mechanism, which enables reflexive agency and evaluation of institutional arrangements, according to how it is experienced by people (Nilsson, 2015). It creates a space for the deconstruction of culturally transmitted norms and their renegotiation.

According to Nilsson (2015) there are spheres of social policy and practice, which cannot be successfully designed, neither controlled, without reaching for the experiences of individuals, who are a part of it. Action, that seems appropriate to achieve one goal, can lead to negative consequences in another sphere at the same time. According to Khan, Munir, and Willmott (2007), it is well illustrated by the example of a child labor reduction program, case of institutional entrepreneurship, that has shifted soccer ball production from homes to central hubs. Basing on the set indicators, the project was a success - 95% of soccer balls were child labor free. However, it led to side effects in areas not previously envisaged - most of the home-based workers were not able to continue their work, what increased the poverty in their families (Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007). These effects were only discovered when discussing personal experiences with the project. In terms of evaluation, the problematic is the fact, that experiences do not have to be reflected by observable structures of behavior or language, neither by quantitative indicators. The symbolic is often misleading because it does not include the inter-subjective perspective of individuals. Moreover, "sources of legitimacy are not monolithic. They may

compete with each other” (Trank & Washington, 2009). Experiential surfacing allows for uncovering “hidden aspects of institutionalized power”, which is particularly useful for policies and programs addressing social purpose, like freedom, well-being, interpersonal relationships, community, and many more. From a perspective of field practice, surfacing and discussing experience, is a positive institutional work and a way to reproduce positive relational patterns. The phenomenon is most widespread among social purpose organizations (Nilsson, 2015) - therefore the non-profit sector is the ripest field for research.

In the field of positive organizational studies, the term *inscaping* was invented. **Inscaping**, is “surfacing the inner experiences of organizational members during the normal course of everyday work” (Nilsson & Paddock, 2013, p. 3). It is achieved through regular sharing of interior states, emotional expression (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003), and dialogic capacity. It is the practice of asking team members how they experience their daily work and projects, which triggers reflection and prevents dehumanization of the organization. Usually, “people connect more immediately to the fact that they are not simply their organizational roles and that the organizational objectives are not ultimate objectives in a moral sense” (Nilsson & Paddock 2013). In so called inclusive spaces, where discussion and interactions between actors take place, functional categories and roles are temporary disrupted in order to collaborate on achieving some shared goal.

Practice of surfacing and sharing experiences may lead to various positive results:

- Values deinstrumentalization and moral development of an organization (Nilsson, 2015)

- Social identity confrontation and improved understanding between diverse actors, who have a different knowledge background (Nilsson, 2015)
- Patterns recognition (Moore & Westley 2011)
- Emergence of shared orientation towards personal and organizational growth (Nilsson, 2015)
- Emergence of high quality connections (Dutton & Heaphy 2003; Stephens et al., 2012)
- Triggering forms of institutional agency (Nilsson, 2015)
- Reflexive and inclusive organizing (Thomas et al., 2018)

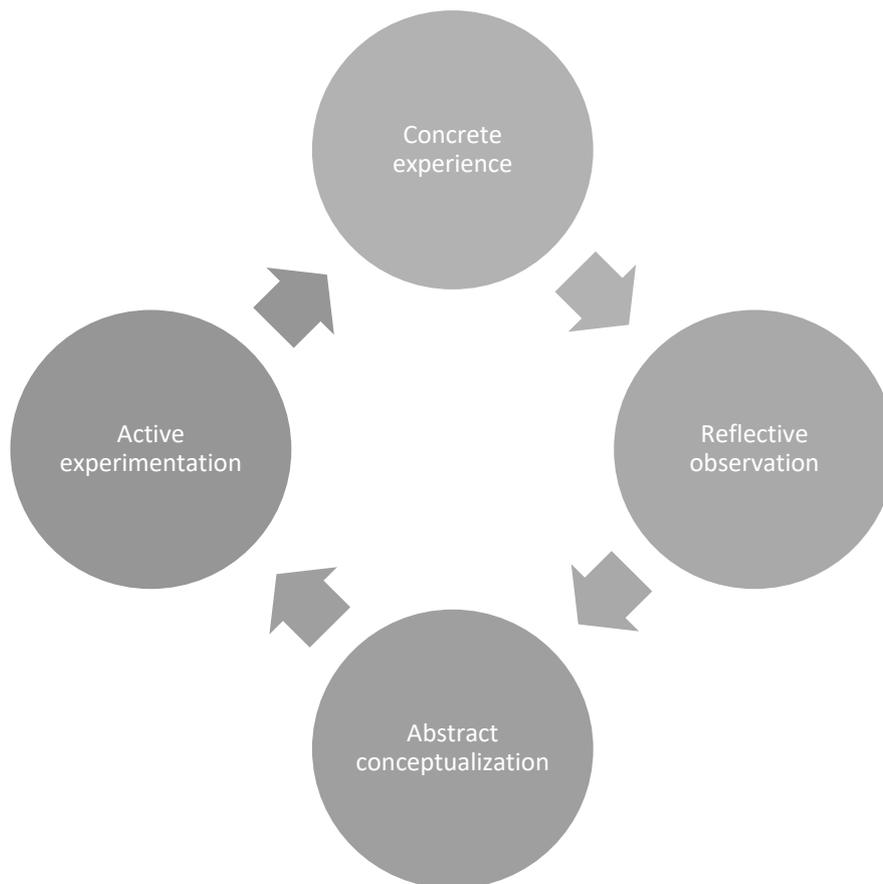
Moreover, in organizations which practice inscaping, the employees develop a sense of psychological safety, which motivates them to discuss work issues with colleagues, and to develop their professional skills. Experiential surfacing affect goals, social awareness, and transformative power of an organization (Nilsson, 2015).

The experientially oriented work was summarized by Thomas et al. (2018) as three subprocesses, continued in cycles: **experiential surfacing, experiential reconciling, and experiential aligning**. Sensemaking is a key process of reconciling, which involves multiple actors in negotiations, creation, and maintenance of intersubjective shared meanings (Maitlis, 2005; Weick, 1995). Afterwards, the new understanding is being aligned with the goals for the practice. The results of experiential work inform the new adjustments. Experiences of certain practices may vary between actors, what can lead to conflict emergence. The conflict, however, can be considered a source of information and opportunity to discuss and implement changes (Thomas et al., 2018).

To better understand, how the organization and its members learn from experiences, it is worth exploring the concept of **experiential learning**. It is a “direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter, or only considering the possibility of doing something about it” (Borzak, 1981). In simplest words – it is learning by doing. The theory of experiential learning was developed based on works of prominent authors, such as John Dewey, who explains the processual character of learning, and Jean Piaget, who adds the element of accommodation of existing concepts to experience (and backward, assimilation of experience into concepts). “To learn is not a special province of a single specialized realm of human functioning such as cognition or perception. It involves the integrated functioning of the total organism - thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving” (Kolb, 1984). Knowledge acquired from experience involves participation of senses, linking to past experiences and confrontation with other individuals in a dynamic process of exchange. Lev Vygotskij added the element of collectiveness to the theory of experiencing. Based on that, experience can be defined as “a category of thinking, a minimal unit of analysis, that includes people (their intellectual, affective, and practical characteristics), their material and social environment, their transactional relations (mutual effects on each other), and affect. Thus, in the understanding of Vygotskij, experience is not something concealed within individuals, but „extends in space and time across individuals and setting in the course of temporally unfolding societal relations, which themselves are perfused with affect” (Vygotskij, 1935/2001 after Roth & Jornet, 2014).

Experiential learning model includes four stages: **concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualization; and active experimentation** (Kolb, 1984). It is shown on a figure below.

Figure 1 Experiential learning model



Source: Own elaboration, based on the model of experiential learning Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice-Hall.

According to Kolb (1984), “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (p. 32). Transformation means here that knowledge is constantly changing, as it is created and recreated by multiple individuals. Moreover, learning is not taking place simply intellectually, but it is a transaction between a person and its environment. It is an exchange between the subject and object which affects both sides – the person and the environment. Experiential learning can be understood as a “continuum of adaptive activities to the environment” (Kolb, 1984, p. 32), or a never-ending transaction – “a fluid, interpenetrating relationship between

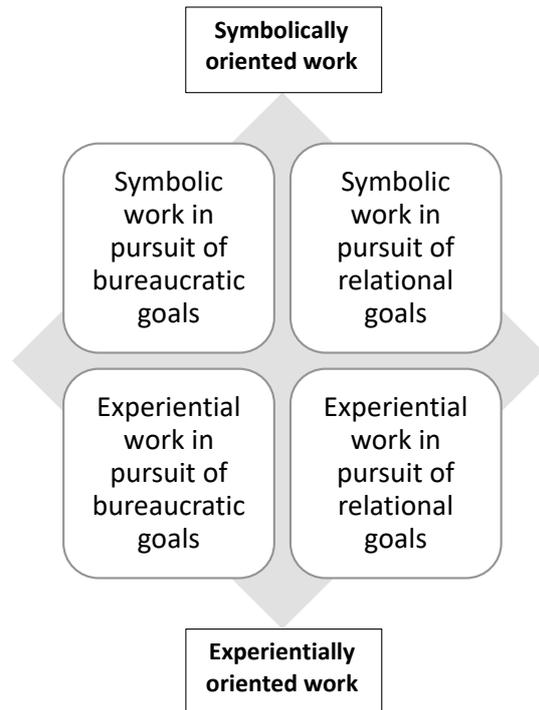
objective conditions and subjective experience, such that once they become related, both are essentially changed” (Kolb, 1984, p. 36).

Getting back to **positive institutional work**, to achieve relational outcomes are required authentic interactions, therefore bureaucratic formalization of experiential surfacing is not a right way to implement it. It may lead to compassion fatigue and compassion labor (Lilius et al., 2012; Simpson et al., 2014) or may create a sense of emotional exploitation and emotional cloning by management (Fineman, 2006). To successfully perform experiential surfacing in an organization, there must be created a space for it in people’s practical, situated activity of everyday work (Thomas et al., 2018).

Experiential surfacing is criticized for certain unintentional results, that were observed in the field. The first thing is “customized emotional responsivity”, which can obstruct honest communication and make difficult the problem solving. Second critique relates to “overemphasizing of relational goals”, what may lead to distractions from task objectives, decrease in productivity and may threaten the sustainability of the practice (Fletcher, 2012). As Nilsson (2015) explains, it is all about the right implementation of strategy to avoid a kind of a form trap. If it is a strategy, not a cover for manipulation or opportunism, experiential surfacing serves the achieving of organizational goals.

The theory of experiential surfacing does not neglect symbolic or bureaucratic work, it strongly suggests the coexistence of contradictive forces that can mutually regulate themselves and institutions. Decoupling of outward expression from inward perception is a protective and important mechanism (Nilsson, 2015). The coexistence of different processes in organizational practice is presented on the scheme below.

Figure 2 Experiential organizing framework: Deconstructing practice based on goals and work orientation.



Source: Own elaboration, based on Thomas, N. K., Sugiyama, K., Rochford, K. C., Stephens, J. P., & Kanov, J. (2018). Experiential organizing: Pursuing relational and bureaucratic goals through symbolically and experientially oriented work. *Academy of Management Review*, 43(4), 749-771.

The author explains that the combination of experiential and symbolic work support achieving positive bureaucratic goals as scalability, replicability, and sustainability, but such combination is also required to achieve relational goals as connectedness, empowerment, and mutuality. Therefore, to achieve organizational goals (both, bureaucratic and relational), there is required a balance between the symbolic and experiential work.

From a perspective of transformational role of social innovation, reaching for the experience of individuals in a conscious and systematic manner, may be a key to positive institutional maintenance. It is a mechanism that enables reflexive

agency and evaluation of institutional arrangements, according to how the institutions are in fact experienced by people.

2.3.2 BUILDING COMMUNITIES

In previous chapters I mentioned that researchers suggest refocusing the analysis of transformation and social change to the local level (Loorbach et al., 2020; Isaksson & Hagbert, 2020; Köhler et al., 2021). I therefore explore the role of communities in transformative processes. In this context, community is conceptualized as “structural hinges between higher level policies and individual actions”, it is therefore an opportunity to connect the needs of individuals with the broader structure (Dütschke & Wesche, 2018, p. 5).

The term “community” have a wide spectrum of meanings. As a local community is described as socio-spacial structures, that connects individuals at shared territory. It is internally coherent and have a shared identity (Moulaert, 2009). Modern urban communities reflect the need for more democratized governance. The new civic society is addressing social issues in an active, agentic way.

Social innovation communities equip individuals with tools that enable them to collectively perform institutional work and to shape the direction of change. Communities, therefore, function as the generative process of institution emergence, simultaneously with the market and policy. The idea is interestingly developed in the theory of **community institution** (Skrzypczak, 2016, 2020), which explains the process in which institutional patterns emerge within communities of social purpose initiatives. Community serves a space for interactions, where individuals collectively negotiate rules and norms, create relationships and shared identity of a group, and take collective action. The author explains, that within communities is performed institutional work at

various levels. In this context, community can be analyzed as an institution itself, which reflects the needs and dynamics of people and everyday practice. It is a proto institution, until the new patterns diffuse (Wijk et al., 2018; Skrzypczak, 2016). Skrzypczak (2020) claims that communities “serve as an intermediary between an individual focused on achieving maximum benefits for themselves on the one hand, and a common interest on the other hand (...) in this way reducing uncertainty in social life” (Skrzypczak, 2020, p. 9). According to this understanding, institutions are “not so much people as regularities (customs and rules) manifested in repetitive human interactions” (North, 1986, p. 231), and communities provide a space and opportunity to interact. During interactions people “experience emotions which enable them to hear and understand others’ viewpoints, stimulating reflexivity, challenging their taken-for-granted perspectives, and partially (or wholly) disembodied them from their governing institutional environment” (Wijk et al., 2018, p. 4). Such experience provides circumstances to learn and understand other perspectives, but also to create the new and innovative ways of thinking and framing. Moreover, it is an opportunity for value flows and shared value emergence (Skrzypczak, 2016). If there is a mixing of social groups within the community, it is an opportunity to expose individuals to different institutional logics (Smets et al., 2012) and therefore improve the communication between various stakeholders. It requires an advanced level of negotiations between actors and various organizational mechanisms, to enable norms’ negotiations within heterotopic groups. In communities “we can observe how actors’ efforts can begin to jointly (re)negotiate the structures, patterns, and beliefs that constitute their social worlds and, even if tentatively and in a fragmentary manner, to co-create alternative proto-institutions with the potential to become institutionally embedded” (Wijk et al. 2018, p.5).

Skrzypczak (2016) describes **co-creation** of service as a determinant of social innovation emergence within communities. It is a co-production at the level that people create the service for themselves by themselves, and do not passively participate in a process. In this case the difference between a creator and a beneficiary is blurred. The issues are addressed by those who are affected by them, their active involvement is crucial. The process itself is empowering. Co-creation allows for a better use of resources and improves the community resilience. Moreover, diversity and inclusivity of this process increase innovativeness, especially with assumption, that every person have a value to offer.

Another mechanism that takes part in institutions emergence is **democratic evaluation** (Skrzypczak, 2016). It means engaging community members in reflexive processes aimed at development. The term was invented already in 70s and what is distinctive from today's common understanding, is that such evaluation does not intent to control neither to satisfy quantitative indicators of exterior actors (MacDonald, 1978; Simons, 1980, 2018), but it is to serve the evaluated. Democratic evaluation in communities, are systematic analysis of performance to improve the value creation. It is an interactive process aimed at achieving a shared perspective, in which multiple actors are engaged, including the public opinion, which may provide a critique or support. The process is educative and discursive, therefore provides information to actors about the development of an initiative (Skrzypczak, 2016).

Community institution concept involves achieving by the actors a **collective knowledge**, "the accumulated knowledge of the organization stored in its rules, procedures, routines and shared norms which guide the problem-solving activities and patterns of interaction among" (Hecker, 2012). Building a **learning community**, which is flexible and co-created, ensures that the knowledge

involves diversified perspectives (Yañez-Figueroa, Ramírez-Montoya & García-Peñalvo, 2016). Within communities, there are created “partnerships of knowledge” that invite various parties to share their perspective and collectively improve the state of the art. There emerge “collectives of reflection”, that include human and non-human actors i.e., institutions, procedures, law, places. Organizational learning is a cyclical process through which knowledge that is learned on an individual or group level is objectified on the organizational level and saved in the organizational memory. In terms of this definition, objectification is the process through which shared knowledge is collectively accepted as being reliable, valuable, and useful by the organization’s members (Probst & Buchel, 1997; Huysman & De Wit, 2002). The process of learning is always burdened with uncertainty. In fact, error is a part of the learning process, since it is the means “to achieve the production, exchange, and dissemination of information” (Yañez-Figueroa, Ramírez-Montoya & García-Peñalvo, 2016).

2.3.3 DEVELOPING NETWORKS

Social innovation networks “are multi-agents, essentially composed of a public agent, the third sector (associations, non-governmental organizations, social enterprises, cooperatives, mutual societies) and individuals (citizens, users, consumers)” (Windrum et al., 2016, p. 5). Participants of a social innovation network share their diversified knowledge and skills, aiming to solve social issues and wicked problems. They develop methods and tools, which address the complex problems in an innovative way. They “find areas of common interest in order to co-create social innovation” (Windrum et al., 2016, p. 5). Social innovation networking is an important mechanism for innovation diffusion or scaling-up, knowledge creation, building individual capacity and accessing larger resources (Szarleta, 2017). Moreover, as in a broad sense “networks are lasting relationships between actors and repetitive interactions’ (Cook & Hardin,

2000), it is an opportunity for institutional logics mixing and improving understanding between sectors.

Scholars in sociology and management have investigated networks in terms of the role networks play in shaping institutions (Hargrave & van de Ven, 2006). For instance, management literature describes widely the efforts of entrepreneurs to transform institutional arrangements in order to commercialize and develop new technologies (Tushman & Rosenkopf, 1992). Entrepreneurs enact networks, that enable them to pursue their interests in political, social and economic spheres. They collaborate (e.g., through alliances) on technology development by sharing knowledge and skills and simultaneously develop the industry, which negotiate new institutional arrangements (Tushman & Rosenkopf, 1992). The networks arise as an effect of multiple events, that engage actors in collaboration for numerous reasons. The motivation is, above all, the need to mobilize resources, but also it is an opportunity to broaden the network of relationships and to reach the key individuals. The joint action should enable a comprehensive achievement of benefits. The network, in the case of commercialized innovations, consist of entities at the same time cooperating and competing, which together “transcend boundaries of public and private sector organizations” (Van de Ven et al., 1999). In social innovation ecosystem, the networks empower actors in a similar way – through providing opportunities. “Actors gain the capacity to mobilize resources to achieve a goal” (Avelino et al., 2020, p. 957). Institutional work within networks “occurs through the development of joint projects among local actors. It is from the submission of the joint projects that the actors perceive and create new common goals (Balestrin & Verschoore, 2016). The ground for understanding and the field for joint action often appears thanks to common interests. Network’s density increases if actors have a possibility to collaborate and self-coordinate, as empirical research shows (Lombardi et al., 2020).

The studies of local actors acting for nuts cultivation and extraction in Amazon forests, has shown, that there is little formalization in the network, and non-hierarchical structures (de Lima et al., 2020; Provan & Kenis, 2007). According to Avelino et al. (2020), the empowerment of actors depends on “access to resources” and on “the capacity and willingness to mobilize resources” (p. 972). The willingness is achieved through „satisfaction of the psychological needs for (1) relatedness, (2) autonomy and (3) competence, and achieving a sense of (4) impact, (5) meaning, and (6) resilience” (Avelino et al., p. 972). These are the major motivations for enacting social innovation networks.

2.3.4 GOVERNING

The field of social innovation, has developed its potential by linking „down-to-earth, bottom-up initiatives to necessary governmental transformations” (Nussbaumer & Moulaert, 2007, p. 73–78). Governance is a meaningful task for the transformative purposes of social innovation, nevertheless, combination of these two levels is a complicated task, and still, underdeveloped mechanism.

According to the definition, **governance** is the “government of a network whose analytic themes are focused on the mechanisms of coordination, consensus and the roles of the different agents of the network in order to get to agreements and implement actions” (Unceta et al., 2017, p. 408). The authors further explain, that in case of social innovations, the concept “expresses a new configuration of relations among state, market, and society”, and enables the intersectoral collaboration (p. 409). The role of informal networks is underlined because they strengthen the engagement of civil society and participation. It is however worth remembering, that informal networks weaken the institutional structures that are consolidated for resolving public matters (Unceta et al., 2017). According to the global trends, “the empowerment of local population is a precondition for

democratic governance and the building of connections between sections of the local system" (Novy & Leubolt, 2005, p. 2). The role of a citizen has evolved from a recipient of policy to a co-creator of public sphere. Social innovation provides various political possibilities "embodying simultaneously an instrumental problem-solving strategy as an outsourced response to urban policy failure as well as a more expansive, playful, maximalist approach to innovating new institutions and political configurations that may help transform how, in a Polanyian sense, we see and reproduce the economy" (Thompson, 2019, p. 1169). For the governance, the interactive space created by social innovation, serves as a source of local knowledge, co-created by diversified actors and organizations (Yang, 2018). Such knowledge includes all types of 'culture-specific information, knowledge, skills, norms, taboos, codes of conduct, customs, norms of behavior, conventions, and traditions on desertification control that are based on local experience, wisdom, practices, and histories and are mainly owned by the locals' (Yang, 2015, p. 617). The richness of information is accessible and is necessary to resolve social challenges. Application of transformative policy, as mentioned before, has a form of action which is local, therefore, reaching for local knowledge and networks is crucial.

Governance provides an opportunity for mutually beneficial relationship, as authority recognition is necessary for social innovation to successfully co-manage a common good and trigger the social change (Avellino et al., 2017; Ostrom, 1990). Nevertheless, there are currently tensions between community work and central state, where the latter is criticized for being authoritarian and constraining. Social initiatives, emerging in democratic processes, are often blocked from developing its potential by lack of possibilities to collaborate with local or central authorities. Moreover, politicians often use participation as a tool for dismissing responsibility for taken decisions (Miessen, 2013). In a context of such events, the critics of social innovation emerge, claiming that it privatizes

the social problems that supposed to be resolved by the state in a way that provides solutions available to everyone, not exclusively to the beneficiaries of local initiatives (Świrek, 2016).

Poor collaboration between authorities and organizations can have various reasons. In the context of Poland these are for example cultural barriers and stereotypical thinking (Hensel & Glinka, 2012). However, the communication problem between the third sector and authorities exists also at the very basic and practical level of work dynamics. It is described as conflicting logics – the logic of a “project” and of a community (Skrzypczak, 2016). Differences are major. For the community work, the important is improvisation and flexibility to adjust to community needs and resources, while the logic of „projects” usually requires planning the results in a very detailed and forecasting manner. Effectiveness of a project is measured by quantitative indications, like a number of organized events, while often more important would be the qualitative value produced in a project, e.g., learning new skills. Moreover, there is little space for creativity, as more valued by funders are conventional solutions (Opióła, 2017). In the context of the above, the important role in accelerating social innovations play the funding organizations from non-profit sector, like The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives (FISE), which provides trainings and distribute financial support to initiatives.

According to social innovation literature, “to achieve human needs satisfaction, bottom-linked institutions for participation and decision-making, embedded in wider movements and governance structures, are essential” (Moulaert, et. al, 2010, p.13). Ostrom (2005) however observes that most of the “contemporary policy recommendations” are based on the assumption that governments are capable of analyzing objectively the social problems and producing effective solutions. Instead, scholars prove, that reflexive agency and evaluation of

institutional arrangements, according to how it is experienced by people is crucial (Nilsson, 2016). Therefore, in order to improve the process of transformation towards more sustainable society, the communication between different actors in public sphere requires improvement.

2.3.5 FRAMING

Within the past twenty years, social innovation has created a discourse that informs about challenges and raises awareness on different social and environmental issues - for example on energy transition (Karanasios & Parker, 2018). Socially constructed patterns of defining, understanding, and validating, are an engine of change.

Framing is a meaning work, that aims "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (Goffman, 1974, p.21) the ideas and actions, and to explain its significance. It brings reflection to what is taken-for-granted and creates a space for change. The role of framing is very broadly described in the literature on social movements. The topic is popular among scholars since at least 1975, after social movements were recognized as professional organizations impacting political, social, and economic spheres. Framing influences the likelihood of actors gaining reflexive awareness of tensions, cracks, and contradictions among institutional prescriptions, called reflexivity. It creates a tension between current social order and what is "imagined and symbolic" (Skrzypczak, 2020) or what is expected to be. Framing is a process which involves „to varying degrees in various contexts - resistance, negotiation, and collaboration" (Newth, 2015, p. 369). The process of framing, according to Benford and Snow (2000), have different purposes:

1. Diagnosing – diagnostic framing is about recognizing the problem and its stakeholders (the victims and those who are responsible), moreover it

is a activity aimed to improve the understanding of a problem. It is asking critical questions about the meaning and function of processes and activities.

2. Prognosing - prognostic framing involves the articulation of solutions and appropriate strategies for attaining them. It is therefore proactive. The aim is to suggest an alternative.
3. Motivating - motivational framing serves as a "call to arms" for social movement members, which support the process of mobilizing people to actively participate or support the movement.

The above tasks of the framing may be performed in various way. First, are discursive devices – the written and spoken narratives developed around the social problem. It includes the official communication of a movement or social innovation initiative, slogans, articles, and public debate. From this point emerge the language which is empowering and provides the vocabulary adequate to express the nature of a problem. The example might be "Homeless, Not Helpless" (Benford & Snow, 2000), which points to the fact that people who are in homeless crisis, often have multiple skills and capabilities, which are dormant, due to their homelessness. Discursive devices may take the graphical form as well. The example of it is a graffiti project against violence against women of a team "Plakaciary". They did a meaningful work in a subject of naming the multiple situations of sexual assault and improving therefore the ability to recognize and react to violent abuse.

Framing is also a strategic process – the activities aimed at a achieving a specific goal, which are deliberative and utilitarian. These are **frame alignment processes**, for example recruitment of new members or searching for necessary resources. According to Benford and Snow (2000), it may take a form of

“bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation” (p. 624). “Bridging can occur between a movement and individuals, through the linkage of a movement organization with an unmobilized sentiment pool or public opinion cluster” it is therefore activating individuals and social groups, who are already dissatisfied with a certain situation, and looking for allies. **The frame amplification** is related to idealization, inspiration, and rooting the new idea in values and beliefs. The key to success here is referring to those values which are in fact present currently in a society. **The frame transformation** is a sort of strategic practice, which aim is to change the old understandings and meanings and replace it with new ones (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Framing involves criticizing the status quo and it is a never-ending process. According to Bolton and Chapello (2005), the capitalistic system has the ability to transform itself by internalizing the criticism toward it, and therefore it may develop and continue. New forms of framing respond to the failures of the past, and offer the alternative ideas, language, and perspective. It is therefore a component of the engine of change.

The framing practice in social innovation has the same meaning and purpose as in the field of social movement. Nevertheless, social innovation approach has the collaborative and participatory character, therefore, there is a space for collective and interdisciplinary work of actors, who negotiate the meanings from different perspectives and interests. Such opportunity may appear during the co-creation of solutions with involvement of both – the beneficiaries and authorities, while innovations can be better understood by different stakeholders of the problem. Participation reduces the potential resistance to innovation and change, what increases the chances of diffusion for a social innovation.

3. RESEARCH METHODS AND APPROACH

In the chapter, I describe the research methods chosen for the dissertation and exploration of the field of social innovation. First, I explain the research problem and research objectives, later I relate to the paradigm in which the dissertation is embedded, as well the metaphor by which subjects of research are presented. I describe the selection of research tools, case selection strategy and, briefly, the course of the research to familiarize the reader with the context of this dissertation. Last part of the chapter is dedicated to the methods of data analysis. I describe the process of coding and crucial, for the empirical chapter, codes.

3.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DISSERTATION OBJECTIVES

The dissertation focuses on the transformative capacity of social innovation. It analyses the mechanisms enabling initiatives categorized as social innovations to modify norms, behaviors, and beliefs, and resulting in social change. The transformative character of social innovation was recently broadly described by a group of scholars (Transit project, 2017), and the light has been shed on new research opportunities. Most of the subject literature tackles the problem of transformation and change from a macro level perspective, which I present in the literature review, whereas the micro-perspective on transformation issue is still undeveloped, leaving a literature gap to be filled. Therefore, in my research, I focused on analyzing communities and organizations that create and disseminate social innovations.

The research problem I addressed concerned the role of bottom-up initiatives, in the processes of transformation. More specifically, my aim was to confirm (or

deny) whether social innovations participate in a transformation process, and to identify organizational mechanisms by which social innovation agents shape the impact of their organizations. The available literature on the transformative role of social innovation lacked reference to the methods of organizing that would be related to introducing alternative ways of behaving and thinking and diffusing the new patterns to a wider audience. I hoped to find in the field the insights about micro level mechanisms of exerting institutional pressure applied in a process of designing and producing the social impact of innovation.

Therefore, I analyzed the dynamics and characteristics of work in three chosen initiatives (Open Jazdów Settlement, Paca 40 Action Space, Food Cooperative Dobrze) e.g., methods of setting and achieving organizational goals; decision-making processes; the values and beliefs with which participants of the social innovation identify; and the relationships formed by members of the communities. Moreover, I took a closer look at the learning processes that enable change at individual level within communities.

The local dimension of inducing a social change is an important component of the process of change towards more sustainable models of society. The results of this research will feed the discourse on transformative nature of social innovation.

Research objectives

Below I present the research objectives. The data collection process had an iterative character (Glinka & Czakon, 2021), therefore the list of research objectives was extended along with the enrichment of the empirical material obtained in the field. Moreover, the new objectives were set during the process of comparing the data collected with other studies and theories.

The **cognitive objectives** of the dissertation are as follows:

1. To summarize the macro and micro mechanisms of institutionalization available to social innovation initiatives known so far.
2. To complement the knowledge on micro level mechanisms and processes through which social innovation initiatives can shape a social change.
3. To identify the process of learning a social innovation within communities.
4. To identify the values, language and symbolic meanings, characteristic for researched organizations.
5. To understand the meaning and role of collaboration in the field of social innovation - a practice which was very often emphasized by the representatives of the research area.
6. To describe everyday practice situations, where members of social innovation community negotiate norms and rules between themselves.
7. To describe how actors use the realm of experiential institution to shape new social practices.
8. To demonstrate the elements and organizational processes that allow to reach for experiential knowledge in social innovation initiatives.
9. To explain the role of reaching the collective experience of diverse society for transformation processes.
10. To describe the character of interactions and interpersonal relationships that empower the mechanism of experiential surfacing, by providing examples of practices from the field.

11. To develop the understanding of a process of shaping norms and rules, so that emerging institutions address social needs and challenges in a better way than current ones do.

The **practical objectives** of the dissertation are as follows:

1. Informing social innovators about the methods of inducing a social change
2. Disseminating the knowledge about practices enabling implementation of the sustainable development policy.
3. Bringing to light, naming, and explaining the practice of experiential learning and experiential surfacing, which are supportive for reaching the aims of social innovation. Informing how to effectively use experiential knowledge gained during experimenting, conflicts, shared events and other situations commonly occurring during community organizing, in order to shape the social change.
4. Explaining the role of the process of collective co-creating social innovations at all stages and levels of action.
5. Explaining the role of diversity of social innovation communities in the process of shaping new practices.
6. Informing the policy makers about the possibilities of involving social innovation initiatives more actively in the processes supporting the transformation towards sustainability.

The following dissertation benefits the understanding of mechanisms by which social innovation shapes and cause the social change, contest the habits, and produces new practices.

Research questions

I started my field research by asking the research questions. They were the result of an initial familiarization with the literature on the subject and were supplemented with additional sub-questions, which specified the research interests.

The main research question:

Do the agents of social innovation shape the impact of their organization and transform reality, and if so, how?

The specific questions:

- 1. By means of which mechanisms social innovation is institutionalized?*
- 2. How do agents of social innovation negotiate and shape norms and beliefs?*
- 3. How do individuals learn social innovation?*
- 4. How do social innovation communities grow and morph?*
- 5. How are social innovation communities organized?*
- 6. How does a social innovation shape the discourse around the problem it aims to solve?*
- 7. What is the role of co-creation, participation and collaboration in the change making process?*
- 8. What are the factors supporting co-creation of social innovation?*

3.2 PARADIGM AND METAPHOR

The purpose of this subchapter is to specify the theoretical fundamentals on which the research is based. Paradigms in social sciences describe the basic understanding of social reality, which is an analytical lens for a researcher (Kuhn, 1962). Currently, there are four leading ontological beliefs, within which every research may fit: pragmatism, positivism, realism and interpretivism (Bryman, 2012). The following research is located within **interpretivist paradigm**, which indicates that social actors should be perceived as subjective and concerned of external forces affecting them (Bryman, 2012). The research located within this paradigm, is based on the idea, that reality can speak for itself, learning from empirical study is a way to capture the truth. The reasoning of this research is inductive, themes and patterns emerged from the data collected in the field. Moreover, I took the opportunity available in inductive reasoning and modified the research questions and research problem after facing the reality of the field (Kostera, 2013). I was adding new research objectives, and new research questions after confrontation with the field, and during systematic analysis of collected data. This practice allowed me to deepen the understanding of the most interesting topics emerging from the field at that time. I was able to follow the trail that the field marked and to immerse myself in the dynamics of the work of social innovators. I found this method very adequate for my research problem. The research assumptions resulted from the chosen paradigm, what ensures the cohesion of the dissertation. The constructivism indicates that reality is socially constructed, it is subjective and depend on local truths. Moreover, it is shared by individuals within specific time and space (Kostera, 2013). My role was to describe what this reality is, what does it mean, and how is it created.

In the process of studying, analyzing, and describing the results, I found very useful the **metaphorization**, which allows understanding one domain of

experience by a meaning of another (Koch, Deetz, 1981). "The organization theorists and managers alike have used a variety of metaphors, or images, to bound, frame and differentiate the category of experience referred to as an organization" (Smircich, 1983, s. 340). In the following research I apply the **cultural epistemology** (which comes from the tradition of organizational studies) to meet the objects of my research and reflect the nature of the social innovation ecosystem. To be more specific, I am going to adapt the metaphor of culture in its anthropological sense - as a *root metaphor* (Kostera, 2013, s. 31), which means, that organization is interpreted as it is a culture, and is characterized by dynamism and artifacts of culture. Culture is an umbrella term, which (by its basic definition) covers the elements, like knowledge, beliefs, morality, and capabilities owned by organization or community members. The definition however evolved over the time (Krzyworzeka, 2016). According to the new school, culture is an active process of sense making. It is happening in a time; it is dynamic and changeable (Krzyworzeka, 2016). According to the model of Hatch (1993), such a change is repetitive and circular, therefore organizational culture may seem to be constant. Nevertheless, the movement and elasticity are necessary for the sustainability of a culture. Organizations produce their own cultural artifacts, like rituals, symbols, myths, stories, legends, and specific language to express and cultivate "the values or social ideals, and the beliefs that organization members come to share" (Smircich, 1983, s. 344). All the above elements have been subjected to field observations, thanks to which the result of my research takes into account the local, cultural context of social innovations.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS: ETHNOGRAPHY AND CASE STUDY

By continuing the logic of interpretivism, I decided to base my research on **qualitative methods** – case study and ethnography – which are adequate for the explorative character of my research. The micro perspective on transformative

social innovation, and the role of local communities in it, are not fully understood yet. Qualitative analysis allows to reach for the facts that are present in the field, where the practice of social innovation takes place, and analyze it for scientific purposes. Following the assumption that reality is socially constructed (e.g. Searle, 2010), reaching for direct contact between the researcher and his or her subjects, is necessary to understand characteristics and dynamics of social activity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). I consider the chosen methods as an opportunity to pass the voice to the innovators who deal with transformation of norms and believes in the field, and experiment with various solutions *in vivo*. Therefore, the research legitimizes those patterns of inventing and disseminating social innovation, which repeatedly appeared in the studied cases, and were considered crucial by practitioners for achieving social innovation goals. Personally, I share the opinion of Denzin and Lincoln (2010) that social science should serve social justice, equality, peace, and universal values. In the field of management studies, there is a need to learn from organizations navigated by social purpose about best practices to achieve transformative goals of sustainable development. In the next chapter I will try to provide a picture of alternative (to mainstream) dimension of organizing, where members of modern society gather to solve social issues, create empathic relationships, and impact institutional structures.

For the above purpose I studied three organizations that produce social innovations. The case study method was suitable for in-depth, holistic exploration of a phenomena. It is a method of research that provide not only technics and procedures but also a lens used to analyze the reality. In socially constructed reality, empirical cases are constantly created, recreated, changed, and constructed, in a unique and negotiable processes (Obłój, Wąsowska 2015). This is the way in which I perceive the subject of this research - as dynamic and context dependent. In the following work, every case is described separately, so

the portrait of each is presented to the reader with no compromises on details. Only later, the narration of regularities taking place in the ecosystem of social innovations is led according to the systematics of presented concepts.

In the next chapter I adapt the narration of **ethnography**, which allows to visualize theoretical concepts by the stories from everyday life. Ethnography does not create an abstract, general theory, but rather privileges the local character of its explanations. In fact, the local context constitutes the produced knowledge (Prasad, 1997). Such approach is very relevant to the theory of social innovation, which tells that ideas might be global, but performance is always local, and the context must be recognized (Moulaert, 2009). Ethnographic research is an interpretative, inductive method of exploring the reality by personal contact with a field and people, and disciplined ways of data collection. It allows understanding and problematizing the aspects of life, which may seem obvious to a regular observer. In fact, the role of ethnographer is to explain actor's performance in a broader perspective of time, space, and context (Kostera, 2013).

For ethnographic study very characteristic are detailed and thick descriptions of reality, which are meant to uncover and analyze data, and allow the reader to visualize the phenomena (Kostera, 2013). The plot of the empirical results in the dissertation, is built around the theoretical concepts that this research aims to communicate. I present the perspective of different actors and embed their interpretations of concepts in the context of time and space. I often develop concepts provided me during interviews without losing their original nomenclature. I consider the field nomenclature important, if only because it is already established in the spoken language. The cited responders are the main characters of the story I tell. As any characters of a plot, the actors of the study use specific language, represent the value system, or have their own practices

and rituals, which must be noticed by a researcher and shown to the reader. This was my intention.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

The main research tools used for collecting data were the **interviews and observations**. Such combination of methods is suggested for example by Stake (2006). The **interview** was semi-structured, it was planned but the formula was elastic, topics were talked freely, according to the mood and temperament of an interlocutor. I adopted a participatory conversation style, which usually helps establishing trust-based relation with interviewee. Even though the trust was not instrumental, it helped avoiding situations when interlocutor say things that he or she thinks is expected by an interviewer (Kaufmann, 2010). In order to ensure the comfort of interlocutors, the place and time of the meeting was usually chosen by them. Sometimes we met in headquarters of their organizations, sometimes in private homes, indoor or outdoor, online or offline - depend on the preferences. I tried to encourage interviewees to narrate their stories and to give meaningful examples from their own experience, to let me better understand the logics, by which they act (Kostera, 2003). The pattern of selecting interviewees was a snowball effect. After each meeting I asked to suggest me a person for the next interview that may complement what we talked about or show me a different perspective. The script of semi-structured interview was divided into thematic blocks, covering the basic topics that I was willing to talk about. The interlocutors varied, depending on the role, which they play in initiative, level of engagement, age, gender, and profession, however they all can be identified as active members of the community. I conducted 27 interviews and achieved the theoretical saturation.

The second research tool was a non-participant **observation**. I did not take any organizational role; I was an outsider. Approximately 10 documented observations were conducted in the researched initiatives. Observations took place in different circumstances: during the regular days of work, on team's meetings and in the interactive spaces. The notes I took in a dedicated notebook. The method of observation gave me a large piece of information about the group dynamics, the style of communication within communities, and the character of work. I was permitted to attend a couple of internal meetings, when I had a chance to take a closer look at organizational processes, e.g., democratic decision making. Moreover, I attended various open events and meetings, thanks to which I was able to better understand the organizational culture.

To ensure multiplicity of data recourses and triangulation of methods, I have been taking a **photographic documentation**. It worked to me as a recall of memories mostly or a chance to see again certain situation that I was observing. Pictures are not included in the dissertation due to the poor quality of some of them but have supported the process of data analysis.

The last source of data was online and offline **documentation** about initiative's performance, and **social media** profiles. I analyzed brochures, websites, project reports, publications and regular communication on Facebook and Instagram. All the collected data was digitalized and stored on an online platform.

3.5 CASE SELECTION AND COURSE OF THE STUDY

I decided to go for a little less obvious research material, and chose initiatives, which are highly innovative and have clear social objectives, despite the fact, that they do not necessarily use the term "social innovation" to describe themselves. In fact, during the research, the term was sometimes adapted by

my interviewees, in our official and less official talks, to describe their practices, and (as I believe) to express their acceptance for becoming a part of this theoretical concept. The method of case selection was a purposeful sampling. The case studies were selected in accordance with the following assumptions:

- All the three cases are bottom-up initiatives of social purpose which produce innovative solutions to social challenges.
- They are located in urban area and address urban issues, as well they perform within urban structures.
- They have gathered large communities of supporters.
- All the initiatives are well recognized by local citizens, as well by local authorities.
- The impact of their practices is proven and documented.

After contacting five different places, I decided to get involved with two (Open Jazdów Settlement and Paca 40 Action Space) and left myself free to choose the last one later, based on gathered insights. Jazdów Settlement - a green enclave in the center of Warsaw, has become in the last 5 years a shared space available to non-profits and citizens of Warsaw. Wooden Finnish houses with gardens, which were once for the exclusive use of residents, have been opened for the activities of numerous formal and informal initiatives. The residents and NGOs have developed a new concept of co-management of Jazdów and keep on working on it. The co-management of the public space is an innovation, which had no standards of conduct in Warsaw and is being experimentally developed in this case. The second case study of my choice is Paca 40 Action Space - a place dedicated to local community development, which involves residents, activists and organizations in shared projects, events and simple hanging out. It

is an innovative form of supporting local community, which is based on the model of developing social and civic competences and building a network of relationships. The concept is inspired by a theory and practice of other centers of this type in the world. Nevertheless, it was implemented in Poland for the first time. The first two case studies provided me a lot of data about co-creation, democratic processes within community, and empathic relationships. I therefore chose Food Cooperative Dobrze as a third one, because it is well known in Warsaw for its collective character of organizing. It is however a different type of organization than Open Jazdów and Paca 40 Action Space, mainly because it conducts economic activity. It therefore increased the diversity of case studies. The initiative (formally association, in 2022 became a legal form of "spółdzielnia") opened the first regular shop with healthy food from local farmers, based on cooperative model and short supply chains. They have gathered a large community of over 370 cooperating households. The initiative is actively participating in fueling the discussion on food security and sustainable farming and is responsible for spreading the idea of food cooperativism amongst Warsaw citizens. For each case study I was writing a background story, while the experience of the field was still fresh and clear.

The research took more than 1.5 years, which was enough time to immerse myself in the field. Through this time, I had a chance to observe the changes that took place within initiatives – for example the rotation of members. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemics took place – a jolt for all the organizations, as well for my case studies. I had an opportunity to discuss the impact it had on the studied organizations, and to observe the results of decisions taken during that period.

In the table below I present a list of my interlocutors. They are divided by organizations to which they belong. There is an information about the length of

each interview, date, and location in which it took place. The list is coded to ensure the anonymity of interlocutors. Quotations from interviews in empirical chapter will be described by the coded names of the interlocutors.

Table 4 List of interlocutors.

	SYMBOL	DATE OF INTERVIEW	LENGHT (in hours)	(in minutes)	PLACE
Open Jazdow settlement					
1	MJ	12.07.2019	1h09	69	Osiedle Jazdów
2	MR	16.07.2019	1h13	73	Osiedle Jazdów
3	GD	23.07.2019	1h04	64	Bar Sportowy Agrykola
4	JK	25.07.2019	1h50	110	Osiedle Jazdów
5	ZA	08.10.2019	0h57	57	ul. Serocka
6	JK	11.10.2019	1h09	69	Osiedle Jazdów
7	GD	11.10.2019	1h18	78	Osiedle Jazdów
8	WZ	15.10.2019	1h27	87	Osiedle Jazdów
9	PC	23.10.2019	0h42	42	Osiedle Jazdów
10	SW	24.10.2019	0h55	55	Osiedle Jazdów
11	SE	30.10.2019	1h29	89	Osiedle Jazdów
Place of action					
PACA					
12	CZ	21.11.2019	0h51	51	Paca 40
13	AC	25.11.2019	0h58	58	Paca 40
14	ZY	02.12.2019	1h32	92	Paca 40
15	JZ	27.11.2019	1h14	74	Paca 40
16	SH	19.12.2019	2h26	146	Paca 40
17	NI	15.01.2020	1h20	80	Nowogrodzka 7
18	KO	05.12.2019	1h02	62	Paca 40
19	WU	25.06.2020	1h01	61	Paca 40
20	WN	20.12.2019	1h14	74	Paca 40
Food					
Cooperative					
Dobrze					
21	AF	07.07.2020	1h33	93	Coffee Desk, Wilcza
22	WD	09.07.2020	0h54	54	Pola Mokotowskie
23	KJ	15.07.2020	1h34	94	Coffee Desk, Wilcza
24	MIJ	20.07.2020	1h15	75	ks. Ignacego Jana Skorupki 6
25	BN	23.07.2020	1h17	77	Coffee Desk, Wilcza
26	KT	04.02.2021	1h09	69	online
27	GN	08.02.2021	0h42	42	online
sum			33h15	1995	

Source: own elaboration

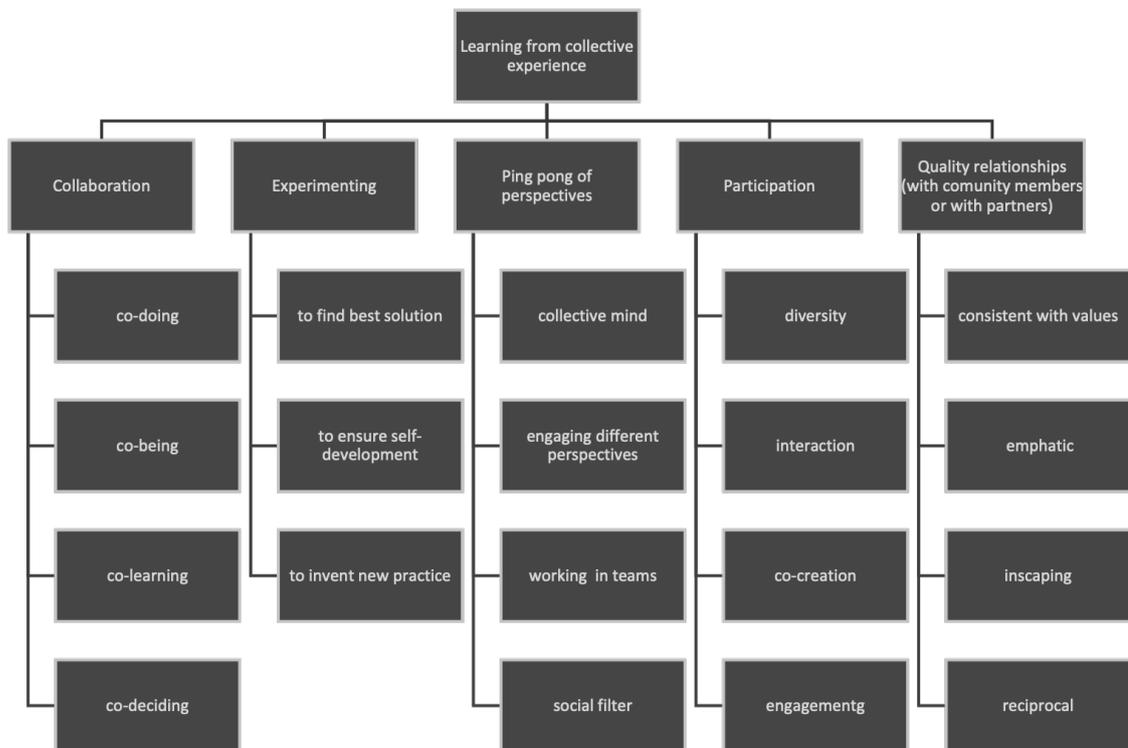
3.6 METHODS OF EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis and synthesis of empirical data was made by a method of **coding and comparison of case studies**. The coding was multi-stage. Initial coding was done event-after-event and was inductive - the codes emerged from the data, often events were flagged with more than one code. The very first themes emerged as well inductively. The most visible in the data was collective character of organizing social innovation in all the three case studies. Therefore, I decoded what collaboration means for the interlocutors. The character of work of the organizations was very dynamic and adaptive, which was reflected in codes such as "experimenting", "innovation in process". The unique aspect of social purpose was visible not only in organizational goals, but also in specificity or relationships build between community members. Soon, I reached the literature which was suitable to support the process of aggregating data. Some of the codes and themes were taken from the literature in order to name the respective field phenomenon (e.g., "co-being") and relate to other author's work. And some codes and themes, like "ping-pong of perspectives" were the expressions of interlocutors, which I found very descriptive and visualizing. In the empirical chapter I distinguish the sources of nomenclature and recall the authors, whenever it is not me. After systematizing the codes in larger groups, the themes were again revised. Data was coded and analyzed with Atlas software, as well with support of traditional notes, pen, and paper.

Below I present the coding trees that visualize the empirical results. The first order codes are located at the bottom, while second order themes are on the top of each graph.

Figure 3 represents a broad picture of learning from collective experience within communities, which takes place during collaboration, experimenting, participation, in a ping-pong of perspectives process, and with support of building qualitative relationships (chapter 4.4).

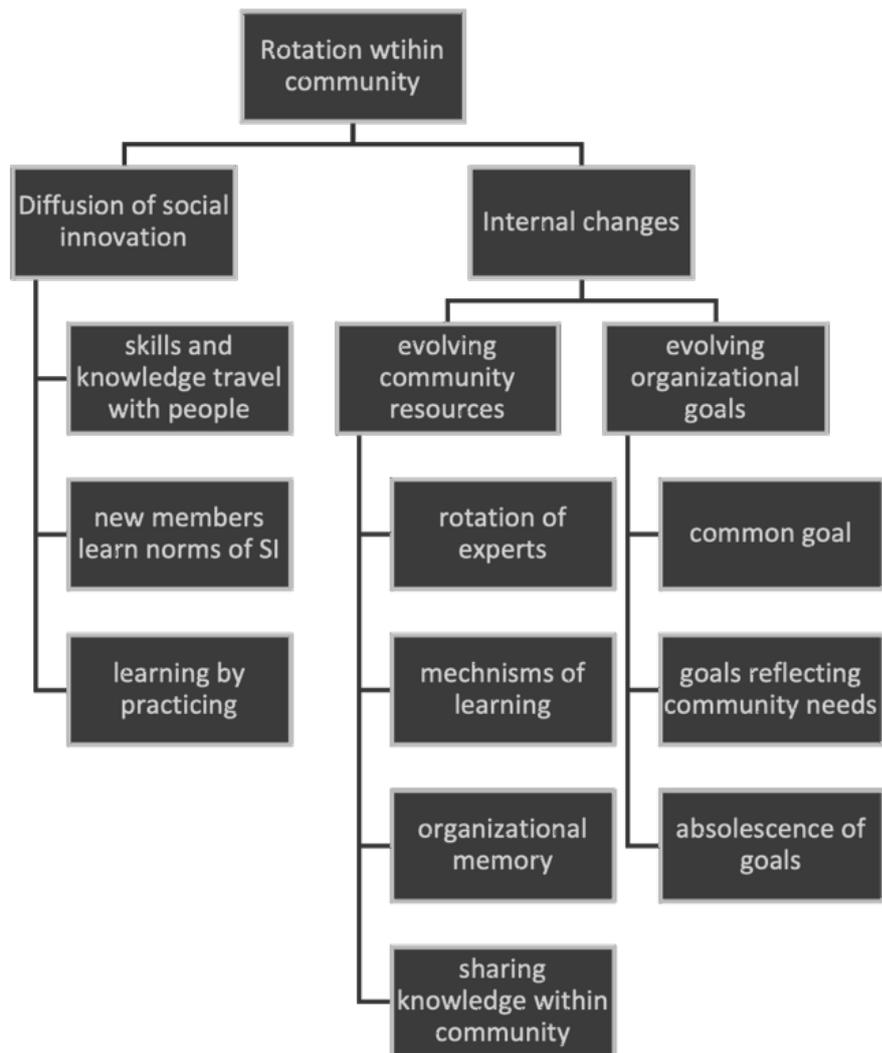
Figure 3 Learning from collective experience.



Source: own elaboration.

Figure 4 explains the relationship between rotation within communities and diffusion of social innovation. Moreover, it describes and the impact of rotation on goals setting within communities (further developed in chapter 4.3).

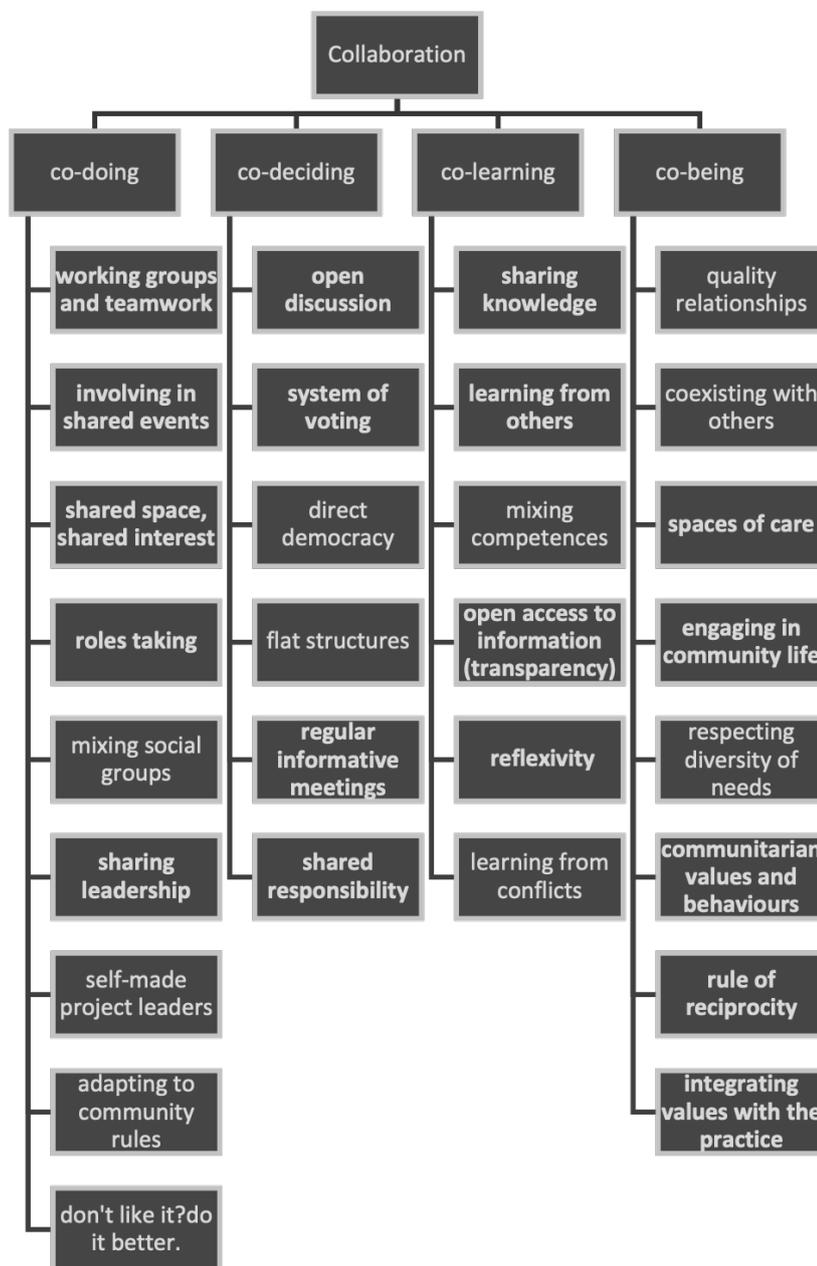
Figure 4 Rotation within communities



Source: own elaboration.

Figure 5 and 6 are expressing the features of community based social innovations. Figure 5 is a code tree dedicated to the concept of collaboration, decoded based on the collected data.

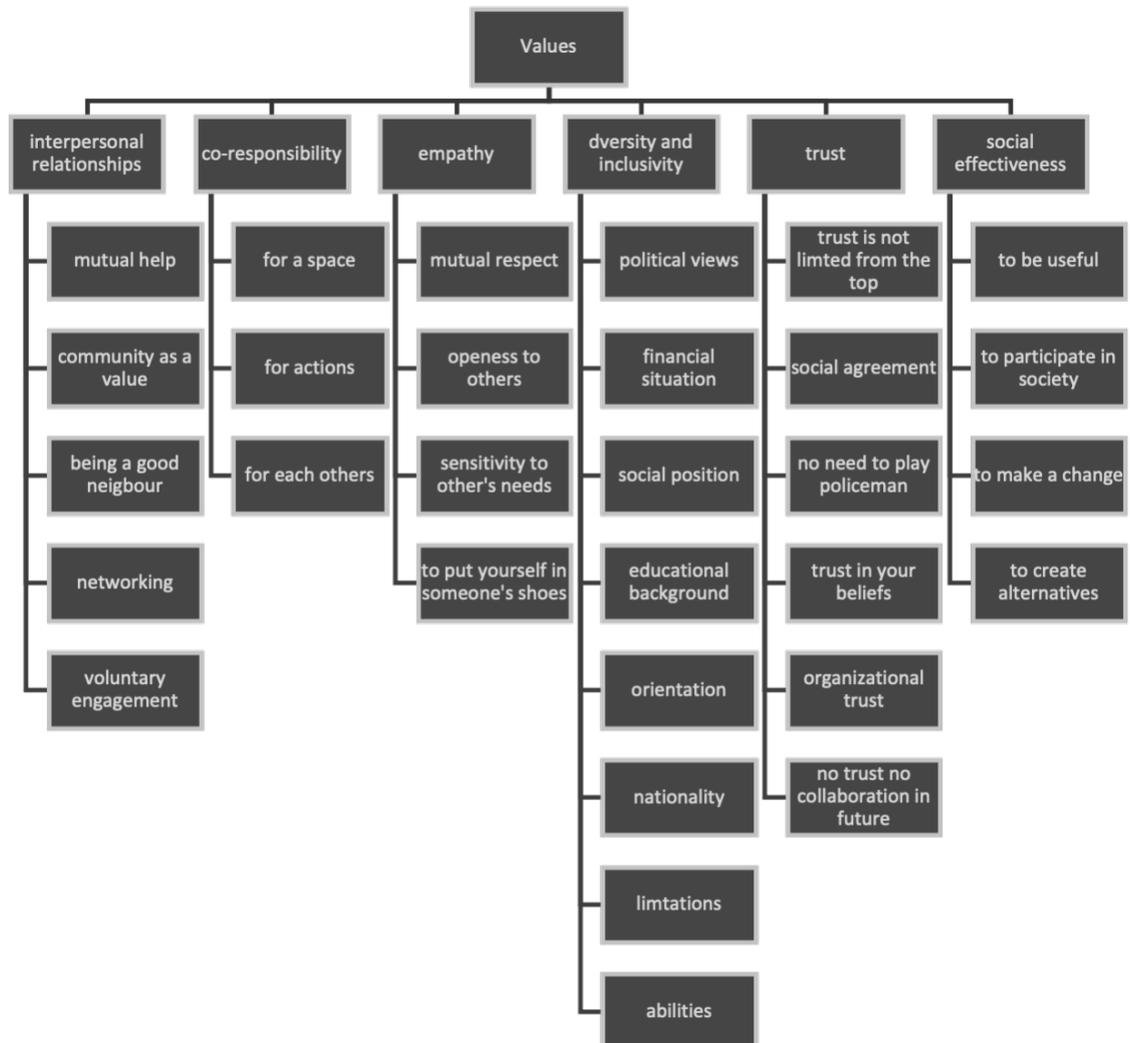
Figure 5 Collaboration within social innovation communities



Source: own elaboration.

Figure 6 is a structure of value system within case studies, which impacts the organizational culture, as well the mechanisms of creating social innovation.

Figure 6 Values within social innovation communities.



Source: own elaboration.

Coding trees represent the results of research I conducted and may navigate the reader through the next chapter of the dissertation, which is organized by the above theoretical patterns.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS: INSTITUTIONAL WORK WITHIN SOCIAL INNOVATION COMMUNITIES.

It has been observed that some ideas travel across all continents to become global (Czarniawska, 2006), despite geographic or cultural barriers. Many societal challenges are transnational in nature, while remedial interventions are culturally, environmentally, and politically dependent, and based on local relationships. The empirical part of this doctoral dissertation concerns the micro perspective of institutionalization, and thus transformation at the local - community and individual level. In this dimension, an important role is played by the way institutions, as well as social innovations, are directly experienced by individuals, i.e., how the designed and established norms are perceived subjectively. This is an important knowledge from the point of view of the functionality of social solutions, it allows to assess its performance in practice. The study and analysis of the experience of individuals allows to recognize the real impact of social innovations on its beneficiaries and other stakeholders, considering the subjective feelings that are difficult to measure, or the contextual (not universal) consequences, which are significant for the achieved effects. From the perspective of social innovation impact, individual experience is an important element, because it enables considering the influence on areas such as subjective perception of personal development and other factors that elude the traditional measurements but are revealed during qualitative interviews and discussions about experience. From the perspective of designing (co-creating) social innovations, ongoing analysis of the experiences of process participants is the key to creating solutions that respond to the real social needs. In the organization, considering a weighty and multidimensional factor, such as experience, is possible only in the mode of *in vivo* experimentation with innovations, which enables the solution to be constantly supplemented with new, emerging perspectives. In this chapter, I provide examples from the

practice of researched social innovation initiatives, that illustrate this theory. I also indicate the mechanisms, conditions, and results of experiential processes that I managed to capture during the research.

One of the most important elements that determines the effectiveness of the experiential process is its inclusiveness. It is because only the subjective experience of those social groups whose interest is represented in the process is taken into account. Therefore, the usefulness of the co-creation principle is revealed here, which explains that social innovations should be co-created by their beneficiaries. In this chapter I dig deeper into the issue of collaboration, which is a part of a co-creation concept, and undertake to specify, in practical and detailed terms, the form it takes in social innovation communities and the way it is practiced. Collaboration occurred to be crucially important in the social innovation initiatives I have researched, which was strongly emphasized by my interlocutors. It is also represented in organizational culture of the initiatives and in their value system. The interconnection between diverse organizational factors shaping effective collaboration, and mechanisms of reaching for the experience of individuals, I intent to explain in the following part of this dissertation. I dedicate the empirical chapter to these mechanisms of institutionalization, which are strongly related to the experiential character of institution, and may be observed in action, interaction, and subjective evaluation.

The community based social innovation initiatives, are the organizations depending on community social capital (Skrzypczak, 2016) and acting toward achieving a common goal and a common good of its participants (following the E. Ostrom understanding of common good that “refers to what is shared and beneficial for the wellbeing of all members of a community achieved through collective participation” (Albareda et al., 2020, p. 2). I therefore focused on the

character of relationships within the initiatives, organizational values, norms, and process of striving to achieve the social goals. I explain by multiple examples how the knowledge is accumulated within communities and transferred to its participants, as well the way in which it travels to a wider audience, i.e., disseminates and diffuse.

The basic tool used for data collection were interviews and observations, therefore this dissertation is abounding with quotes from conversations held. The goal of the quotes is to embed findings in a real context and therefore ensure credibility and practical understanding. Furthermore, the quotes reflect the unique nature of studied groups, including language they use and the atmosphere of social innovations ecosystem.

The structure of empiria is as follows. First, I present the three case studies of social innovation that I have researched. I intent to familiarize the reader with the nature of places and communities, which are not insignificant for the institutionalization tools used by them. I also indicate the different spheres of social life that the initiatives have chosen to transform, it is to reinvent it or to fix it by offering a social innovation alternative. Next, I describe various aspect of experiential learning within social innovation communities, and then I move on to cooperation analyses. I decode the collaboration by the understanding of my interlocutors and present it in four categories of organizational activities. I visualize with examples those situations when the new norms and rules are in a process of structuring. I finally discuss the aspect of diffusion - when experience becomes a vehicle of institutional content.

4.1 PROFILES OF THE RESEARCHED ORGANIZATIONS

Below I present the three case studies that were the objects of research for the dissertation: Open Jazdów Settlement, Paca 40 Action Space and Food Cooperative Dobrze, listed in accordance with the order of research.

4.1.1 OPEN JAZDÓW SETTLEMENT (OSIEDLE OTWARTY JAZDÓW) ¹

A green enclave in the center of Warsaw, has become a common good and a center for social and cultural activism. The colony of wooden Finnish houses with gardens that have once been for exclusive use of the dwellers, is now open to the citizens of Warsaw. Just before that, it has faced the risk of being razed to the ground, what was one of the triggers for a mobilisation to save the place. The common goal has connected the people above their roles and individual interests. In social consultations on the future of the settlement participated over one hundred people. Today, Jazdów is co-created by a diversified community consisting of activists, students, scholars, dwellers, non-profits and non-formal initiatives. They are represented by a body of Open Jazdów Partnership. The participants of the initiative have developed a new concept of co-management of Jazdów that enables integrating the multiple functions and groups of the shared space. The co-management of the public space is still in the process of negotiations with the city authorities. It is an innovation, which has no standards of conduct in Warsaw, and is being experimentally developed in this case.

The Jazdów Estate (Osiedle Jazdów) was established in the summer of 1945 with a view to accommodating people working on the reconstruction of post-war Warsaw. The Finnish houses were transferred to Poland by the USSR, while they

¹ <https://jazdow.pl>

received them as war reparations from the Finnish government. The colony consisted of 90 houses, initially intended to be temporary, the demolition plan was carried out in stages until 2011. However, thanks to the joint initiative of the residents and non-governmental organizations who noticed the historical and cultural value of The Jazdów Estate, the remaining twenty-seven houses were classified as historic. Six of these are still used as living quarters while the rest are under the care of various non-profit organizations.

Three and sometimes four generations grew up in the colony in Ujazdów. The oldest resident I had the opportunity to talk to was 76 years old. He told me about his mother who worked in the Capital Reconstruction Office (Biuro Odbudowy Stolicy). It was because of her work that they were moved to the estate. SE remembers the times when Jazdów was not as safe as it is today, when the houses were in a remote area and there were frequent burglaries and sometimes attacks. The sanitary conditions were also difficult - all tenants used the common bath facilities and there was no central heating, so in winter they had to light the stoves. Difficult times have taught people here to cooperate and help each other. As my interlocutors recall, neighborhood help was the norm that was practiced every day. This ability to live in interdependence with each other was so important for the inhabitants that it has, to a large extent, survived to this day. Those who grew up in here (or have spent enough time), strongly identify with the values of neighborly coexistence. Therefore, the rules of self-organizing are extremely important here, and the initiators of Open Jazdów devoted a lot of energy to developing them. Democratic structures and decision-making processes are to take into account the multiplicity of voices present in the Settlement. The essence of cooperation, networking and combining various knowledge and skills for the development of the initiative is emphasized. Social actors describe the community as open - its composition is not constant and any project which is compatible with the values of the estate

can be implemented. Regular competitions are conducted through which funds are distributed for the implementation of projects, residences and all activities of a social or cultural nature in the Estate. The most important values and assumptions of the initiative, as well as the scheme of action, were written down in the publication *Otwarty Jazdów*, which was co-created with the assistance of researchers and academics. It also defines the role of the city as a co-decision-maker and co-creator of solutions. It is a model of participation in which the power relationship is reversed in order to strengthen the position of the local community. Co-management here means that the users of the space have the right to manage it in the common interest and maintain a certain independence of action in matters related to day-to-day organization. Such a model is based on community knowledge - in accordance with the assumption that the people who actively use a place have the greatest knowledge about what is currently good and needed for it. The collective interest of the community is negotiated and determined through democratic planning and decision-making processes. Each decision, important for the general public, is made during open meetings of the members of the Jazdów Partnership (*Partnerstwo Jazdów*) according to the principle of qualified majority of $\frac{2}{3}$ votes.

New, more structured rules for the functioning of the Estate appeared with the influx of non-governmental organizations to the abandoned houses. As a result of actions to defend this extraordinary space, the old met the new - empty houses were taken over by social initiatives whose activists had to learn to coexist with the local inhabitants. The role of the inhabitants of Jazdów has several dimensions. First of all, they determine the historical identity of the place - they are the carriers of the stories and customs of the neighborhood, but they are also experts in the practical aspects of the functioning of the Estate. An informal agreement was concluded between the parties about the new purpose and nature of the place. Currently, three groups exist: residents of the *Ujazdów*

colony, caretakers of individual houses in the form of non-governmental organizations, and independent activists. There is a rotating leadership model that is transferred regularly between organizations, which increases commitment and inclusiveness. Formal representation of the Estate exists in the form of a union of associations, Open Partnership Jazdów (Partnerstwo Otwarty Jazdów). Innovative projects are implemented on site, such as:

- pro-ecological and solidarity activities (e.g. City Bees (Miejskie Pszczoły), Community Garden (Ogród Społecznościowy), School of City Gardeners (Szkoła Ogrodników Miejskich), Community Library of Seeds and Books (Społeczna Biblioteka Nasion i Książek), Foodsharing, Flower Meadows (łąki kwietne));
- small music events and activities supporting musicians and music (Lado abc, Embassy of Traditional Music (Ambasada Muzyki Tradycyjnej));
- educational activities (e.g. Bullerby Children's Foundation (Fundacja Dzieci z Bullerbyn), Science and Adventure Laboratory (Pracownia Nauki i Przygody));
- creative workplaces and exhibition spaces (e.g. Rotary House of Culture, studio of the Faculty of Architecture (pracownia Wydziału Architektury));
- cyclical events integrating the local community and external partners (e.g. LABA Festival (Festiwal LABA))

The social innovation of the Open Jazdów initiative results from the new way of self-organizing, new networks of contacts and the unique material and non-material resources of the place. The initiative is actively questioning systemic solutions on this micro scale, those which do not enable the local community to fulfill its potential. The new narrative determines not only the purpose of the

Estate, but also the nature of internal (between actors) and external relations (with the city and market entities). Practice has shown that the local community wants to actively create its place and have an influence on local politics; what's more, it can self-organize. The knowledge generated as a result of the activities of Open Jazdów feeds the discourse on the nature of public space and the city-forming role of its inhabitants.

4.1.2 PACA 40 ACTION SPACE (MIEJSCE AKCJI PACA 40)²

The project is in a form of a local activity centre. Located in Grochów district in Warsaw, successfully creates space for integration of various social groups and generations since 2013. In common activities are involved active city dwellers, community workers, artists, and academicians but also people from excluded groups who are being involved in social life through various activities. Regulars of this place learn how to cooperate, polish up their social capabilities and share their skills, knowledge, and experience. They strengthen their civic attitude and gain a sense of control through social self-organizing. They actively participate in the life of their neighborhood, meet local authorities and make use of participation tools (e.g. participatory budget). Together they take bottom-up actions towards the development of local community.

Paca 40 Action Space was founded by Local Activities Support Centre Association (CAL) as a winning project of grant competition in 2013. The project has grown over years and the community has gained momentum. Partners have joined (e.g., Ashoka, Family Fund and City Development Institute) and a

² <https://centrumpaca.pl>

vast community garden has been set up at the back of the building along with Grochowska Cooperative.

CAL specialists identified a problem in the methodology of systemic social service functioning and pioneered in the development of an alternative self-help model in Poland. It involves developing social-civic skills and establishing a network of relations. The important idea is to create with the use of resources of the community, meaning that the community undertakes social initiatives for themselves and does not passively adopt top-down solutions. What is being produced as a result is engagement, joint responsibility, and social capital. Empowerment occurs through action and sense of control. People socially excluded (or the ones that find themselves, in popular today, isolation crisis) have a chance to participate actively in city life. Places such as Paca 40 Action Space provide space available to everyone on equal basis, where social groups and experiences merge both spontaneously and methodically. Creators thereof describe this place as heterotopia where sense of community and local identity have a chance to grow.

The project is built around the idea of voluntary service, meaning all activities are done free of charge and constitute voluntary contribution of Paca 40 Action Space members. One has to respect the principle of mutuality – benefiting from being a part of community compels to offer service to others. This enables to build relation networks based on co-dependence required to restore interpersonal relations in cities. Those principles allow to shape refined sense of belonging to the city which tackles the issue of isolation, atomisation and a sense of loneliness of city dwellers (Skrzypczak, 2018).

Kitchen is the heart of Paca 40 Action Space – a place of meetings, off-the-record discussions and interactions during common meal-preparing and coffee breaks. This convention fosters both spontaneous encounters and planned activities

which often are built around the concept of eating together. On top of that, the place features meeting space where major events are held, a couple of workshop rooms and a Montessori room where children and their guardians meet. In the past there was also a co-work space with computers but it was closed for reasons beyond its control.

Currently, Paca 40 Action Space undertakes bottom-up activities designed by active members of the community. Before, they were set up and supported based on the knowledge of CAL Association and other partners of the project. Current activities include:

sense of neighbourliness, integration, activation practices – feature neighbourly table tennis or a variety of meetings between local seniors;

- family – meetings between children and their guardians;
- health, body, psyche, relations, communication, conscious consumer choices - e.g. brain gymnastics, heart yoga, meetings of Grochowska Cooperative;
- imagination, creativity – e.g. handcraft workshops, PACA Theatre Stage;
- entrepreneurship, social activation – here rooms are made available to NGOs and freelancers

The set of activities above provides glimpse of what is going on at Paca 40 Action Space but it's not a closed list. The place is open to any kind of activity, provided that it discriminates no one and displays spirit of mutuality and respect for principles of local community.

4.1.3 FOOD COOPERATIVE DOBRZE (KOOPERATYWA SPOŻYWCZA DOBRZE)³

Food Cooperative Dobrze is an alternative grocery store chain founded by the healthy food enthusiasts, dissatisfied with a current market offer. Today it brings together over 370 households and runs two stationery shops with ecological food. It maintains close relations with suppliers by creating short supply chains. Formally it was an association, which recently has morphed into a cooperative (spółdzielnia). Dobrze Cooperative shapes social reality by introducing new standards of food distribution, but also by educational campaigns and by forming innovative relations inside and outside of the organization.

The goal of creating Food Cooperative Dobrze was to define standards for different groups of stakeholders in the area of production and sale of food. On the one hand the purpose was to provide ecological products to the citizens of Warsaw. High food prices rendered them inaccessible to many. In the Cooperative however, work for the benefit of the community and paying a small membership fee entitles to preferential prices of products, close to manufacturer's price. The second group of stakeholders are healthy food producers. The Cooperative supports development of local and ecological farms, so fruits and vegetables typical for Poland can be found in shops in season only. Thanks to this, transportation time is shortened, and food doesn't have to be artificially preserved since it reaches the consumer quickly. The goal is to maintain short supply chains too, as they reduce costs and uncertainty related to food access. Here, the members of the Cooperative – the customers, have direct contact with farmers. There are being organized tours to the farms and workshops, the space for dialogue and exchange of knowledge is available. The

³ <https://dobrze.waw.pl>

price policy is also negotiated individually, very often separately from imposed market standards, based on actual outlays of resources. As a result, farmers can count on Cooperative in times of bad crops and the Cooperative can rely on unlimited access to information on product availability in the upcoming seasons. Both groups of stakeholders are members of the Cooperative, so they have the right to decide on its faith. Recently has ended the process of transforming into a legal cooperative, which pave way for new investment and development possibilities.

Cooperative's members have the right to collectively decide on the shape of the shop offer. Therefore, no meat is available, only vegetarian and dairy products. Organizational strategy is devised through direct democracy. Common stance is reached through discussion, and everyone has equal right to vote. Dobrze website says: "We're a flat, non-hierarchical organization. We have no bosses or CEOs. Each member of the Cooperative gets to decide to what extent they want to impact the organization through their involvement"⁴. In the Cooperative, the work is distributed among people who are eager to get involved and help, and salaries are equal, regardless of the position taken. From the very beginning it was supposed to be a good working place as well, hiring people full-time for a decent salary. Value of work is assessed due to engagement and experience, and rules of mutual respect and trust are applied. Shops and other goods belong to all the cooperative's members. Nevertheless, non-affiliated people are free to shop there as well. Commercial customers are yet another group on stakeholders' map, they provide income.

Food Cooperative Dobrze offers a wide range of educational actions, such as workshops available to public, Polish nation-wide Cooperatives Convention or cooperation classes for students at agricultural technical school. It collaborates

⁴ Source: <https://dobrze.waw.pl>, own translation.

with public institutions, takes part in public consultations on agriculture-related topics. It contributes to promoting polish cooperatives abroad, and the idea of running cooperatives in Poland.

Growth and strengthening cooperative's community is the key to its survival. This is why a lot of energy is devoted to common celebration, building relations, and creating space for daily cooperation.

4.1.4 LOGICS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONS

Each of the analyzed initiatives deals with a different area of urban life, which it tries to systematically transform through various activities. Those activities they used to describe in the context of systemic solutions that have failed. Contestation is a mechanism that enables or triggers emergence of social innovation.

The reflection on the status quo during contestation, leads to questioning the taken for granted ways of doing and organizing things. It enables the processes of innovating aimed at addressing social needs, which are not met by the market or state. In case of social innovation initiatives, contestation takes an active form of inventing alternatives and practicing it within a given social context. The intention is to impact the existing social structures or adjust them instead of fitting in.

"here, it is also the case that we are fighting for some change in the world and we disagree slightly on how certain things work and, therefore, some things that are happening here are on the border or outside the system because we are in a slightly different mindset, in which we do not adjust to reality, but we want to adjust reality to what we believe to be right. And this is also some kind of great adventure. Well, sometimes we can

see that we manage to change this world a bit and it is also very uplifting, motivating and mobilizing for further work (WZ)"

Social innovation practices are accompanied by a specific logic that resonates with other logics. Challenging, altering, or replacing institutional logics is a role of successful social innovation (Avelino, 2016). The emerging counter community logics of the studied organizations exist in parallel to the public and market logics. During the interviews, the interlocutors very precisely defined the institutional forces which their initiatives are facing and challenging. In the case of the **Food Cooperative Dobrze**, which runs shops, there is often underlined the opposition to the logic of profit. It is understood as follows:

"The most important difference is the logic of profit. This is absent from the Cooperative. Yes, we try to be economical and develop in order to be able to expand this community, in order to be able to kind of educate others about which model can be introduced to help more cooperatives be created, or other means of shortening the supply chains between recipients and producers, but we do not follow the logic of profit, no, that is, our stocking decisions, any organizational decisions, we do not make based on how much can be earned. " (AF)

For Food Cooperative Dobrze, the profit is a means to achieving other goals, such as fair employment conditions or building lasting and direct relationships with farmers and organic food producers. The choice of a supplier depends on the quality of the goods he offers and the working conditions he provides in his company. Relationships are long lasting, partner changes occur very rarely and are not related to financial profitability. Shortened supply chains allow greater control of food sources, but also require flexibility on both sides.

“dependence on such a centralized, plainly very complex (system) based on long supply chains of distribution systems is very worrying. It's just that everyone feels that at some point, something will just get stuck along the way and suddenly something that was on the shelf is not there anymore. And you don't know where it was from, why it's not available or when it will be. You don't have any influence over it because it's somewhere far away, isn't it? ” (MJ)

“In the Cooperative, you know, Zbyszek calls, he calls and says, “I just got frozen, half of the apples just got frozen. This year there will be a problem, look for other suppliers. There will be a problem with apples ... ” And Rafał immediately announces it to us and we just know what the situation is, we are prepared for it. And so, we get a call in the spring and we know that in the fall there will be expensive apples, and we will have to look for suppliers, right? Well, this is a completely different situation.” (MJ)

MJ refers to food security and emphasizes the importance of access to reliable information, which is lost in the case of purchases from unknown suppliers or large purchasing centers. It is difficult to imagine the situation in which a supermarket would inform its customers six months earlier that certain product will be difficult to obtain in the coming season.

In Paca 40 Action Space, on the other hand, there is practiced the principle of reciprocity. The interlocutors often illustrated it as the opposition to commercial relationship of a service provider and customer. As an example, I cite a story about traditional cultural centers and a difference that subtly, though diametrically, changes the reality created at the Paca 40 Action Space.

“we are working on making it a self-organizing community, not organized according to any idea and where, in which, we provide services. We do not provide services. Another thing is that all the work is to be done by

residents and volunteers, not instructors hired for money. Well, because it is a place of the residents and not a place where various types of services are provided. Like most cultural centers, it simply provides a service. The mechanism is as follows: we recognize the needs of the inhabitants - they want to dance, sing, something like that. Very well, we understand. We employ specialists for this (...) So, such a well-known mechanism. It is different with us - with us, it is as if it is based on the resources and talents of people. So, at the beginning, it is what someone who comes here has in himself. Okay, if he has something, some talent - everyone has some talent - what can be done to activate this talent a little, become ... that is, make him decide, for example, that he can now share his Chinese language skills with others? And then he invites others to come, and if they are willing, then he is with them for free, this resident works.”(SH)

The engagement and voluntary effort of community members is explained to be crucial for the empowering role of Paca 40 Action Space. It is opposed to the logic of social welfare centers that offer a service to people in need. Paca 40 Action Space instead provides opportunity for social networking. Moreover, it is an opportunity to practice the rule of reciprocity.

Next, my interlocutor SH gave me another example - empowerment of mothers in the cities, who due to the system of nuclear families, are excluded from the social sphere. Such situation is difficult for parents of young children and may lead to psychological impediments, which have been studied broadly by scholars (e.g., Hood, 1983). Therefore, in Paca 40 Action Space, there is available an infrastructure that serves both – the children and the parents. Families can integrate here, share obligations, and do some meaningful social work. Coordinators of the facility help to organize a workshop, meeting, or

activity, and provide promotion within a community. They also encourage parents to engage in new relationships and to network.

“Very often it happens that a mother comes with a child, because, when it is little, because such a place is lacking, she can come here. I don't even know, there is a Montessori workshop, she can organize activities with other mothers there, and at the same time it turns out that this mother has some competences, and she would be happy to do something other than just look after the child all the time, for three years, because she is on parental leave. And she conducts some classes - someone will take care of her child at that time. (SH)”

The Space of Action is to be an accessible, inclusive space, conducive to the reconstruction of community ties. The model of reciprocal relations coexists here with the concept of self-help, which is empowering for marginalized individuals. Self-help model is based here on connecting different social groups, sharing knowledge, and increasing the sense of agency.

The Open Jazdów Settlement is an active contestation of the logic of top-down management of public space, which is considered by the initiators ineffective. The dwellers and other users of the Settlement propose instead a model of co-management, which allows them to take care of their space to a greater extent and decide on the purpose of the common areas.

(This is) "a way of self-organization and management of urban space, because here we have ambitions to co-decide about things, to have some kind of autonomy. So, it is easy to imagine that the inhabitants of, I don't know, Muranów housing complexes could have similar autonomy and be able to decide where they want to put a bench, or just put it up and not ask anyone's permission and so on - be able to organize their own events

whenever they feel like it. Of course, wherever there are active residents, wherever they want, because there is no reason to force anyone, but this is the situation in the Jazdów Settlement.” (MJ)

The Open Jazdów Settlement votes therefore for increased agency of those citizens who are active and are willing to participate in the city co-creation. Instead of being passive receivers of policies, business or top-down activities, citizens may actively co-create the city to meet their needs.

Agents of the above social innovation define and shape their community logic. They discuss it in contrast to the status-quo logic. The agents claim that available options (arranged by the state or market) do not enable fulfilment of all social needs, therefore they create an alternative.

4.2 LEARNING FROM COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE AND SHAPING INSTITUTIONS

The purpose of the researched initiatives is to change a fragment of social reality. They create a new space to meet the social needs so far unmet, and therefore fulfill the human’s potential. From individual perspective, the change, above others, is a process of learning. In this chapter, I provide empirical data on the process of generating and transferring knowledge in communities through experiential practice.

Actors of social innovation form communities that serve as vehicles of material elements (practices, activities, structures) and symbolic elements (meaning ascribed to them) (Hensel, 2015). The norms and rules that emerge within such communities, are strongly rooted in the experience of practitioners. The communities not only store the local knowledge, but they offer a space to

recreate the norms and rules. The purpose of recreating the norms, is to shape the social innovation, and therefore fulfill the social needs and secure the local resources.

In the chapter I describe multiple situations, when the experience of community participants is surfaced and informs the adjustments. I provide empirical data that explain what the meaning of reflexivity (Wijk et al., 2018) and experiential surfacing (Nilsson, 2016) for the social structuring process is. Finally, I relate to organizational characteristics of communities, and I discuss the concept of collaboration, which was noticed as important by interlocutors from all the case studies. I distinguish those organizational mechanisms that support reaching for the experience of individuals.

4.2.1 LEARNING THROUGH COLLABORATION

Community knowledge, in the researched initiatives, is in the constant process of evolution. It strongly depends on cooperation between actors, who interact and produce a new understanding of social innovation practice. As one of my interlocutors explain, doing things together within a community is empowering and it is a method of learning.

"Here there is a kind of social animation, but there is also a kind of civic animation which is also a public sphere. A lot of things take place here, like meetings about the district including the civic budget, and also about difficult, various matters; and this path, to put it through or not to. And then there are also one hundred and fifty people here - that is, I think that many such meetings and debates should also take place in such a space as this one. Not in the office, not somewhere, but in such a neutral, friendly space where people can be citizens in a slightly different, safe form; and our role is also to strengthen them in this. That, when people

learn to be together and self-organize for such simple goals, such as doing gymnastics together, then, contrary to appearances, they later become stronger in such a public sphere, where there is a debate about other matters." (SH)

The space for the exchange of knowledge and skills is created, for example, during co-creation of events. Collective organizing, and later together participating in, is a chance to learn from each other in action, as well to improve the quality of event.

"Such an example was, for instance, what happened in the community garden, Motyka i Słońce, where we organized the Picnic with Refugees campaign and took vegetables from the community garden. We got honey from Wiktoria and the refugees used it to cook meals that were sold and there was a campaign to collect clothes for refugees and it's as if this Jazdów melting pot just hatches some really awesome ideas. Because someone can play the violin, someone has a place for a bonfire, someone has vegetables, and easy-peasy, we make a great combination from it all. " (GD)

The clue of co-creation in this case, is that it revealed the skills and resources of diversified actors, otherwise uncovered. It seemed to be surprising even for those who participated in it, as my interlocutor was very emotional about the results of their collective work. It was something like an Eureka! moment of realization about the treasures that the community owns and may use to benefit the social innovation initiative. The creativity was boosted by a process of co-creation.

"Well, I think that that is also the beauty of Jazdów, that we find ourselves in this diversity (...). Because people who deal with the garden learned

from people who deal with education, and people who deal with music learned how to make gardens. As if, you know, there is a constant flow of knowledge, skills, experience - we learn from each other and I think it's great. " (WZ)

One of the results of experiential learning is indeed transferring skills between people. Previous studies on social innovation (Ulug & Horlings, 2019) explained already that it is not crucial to know the technicalities of social innovation practice to participate in the initiative, because this practical knowledge is passed between individuals during the practice. In Food Cooperative Dobrze, all members need to attend their duties in a shop. Compulsory duties for all members of the cooperative constitute a substantial element of organizational model. Duties unburdens the organization and full-time employees, and at the same time build up engagement among other members. Everyone is required to go on duty once a month for 3 hours as a part of free of charge involvement, and work for the benefit of the community. I had a chance to attend a duty at the very beginning of the research, and had a chance to find out what this experience is about. I arrived at the shop at Andersa Street in the morning, right after the opening hours. I was going to attend a meeting I had earlier scheduled however I was already on my way when I found out my interviewee wasn't going to make it. He offered me to talk with the coordinator of the shop who was going to be there on that day instead, which I agreed to. When I arrived it turned out that as an exception only two people were on duty that morning – a woman at cash register and a storage keeper unloading goods from morning deliveries, stocking up shelves and checking items off on invoices. After several minutes of conversation with the lady I moved to the storage. I introduced myself and offered to help, explaining I would gladly see what the job of a storage keeper involves. WD took me in without second thought especially that the day was busier than usual. He has been holding this position for a while now, being it the

second most popular at the shop. He says he feels more comfortable in this role than working at the cash register as he enjoys morning chats with suppliers. We stock up refrigerators and shelves while talking. We complain a bit about how little space is there (the room is tiny) and stuff new products according to category. I get to take a closer look at the selection of products: soya yoghurts, fair trade and organically grown coffee and tea, chocolate supporting education of children in exporting country in Africa, a few types of tofu and superfood, such as Chlorella algae. Except for the latest delivery, the shop is full with products available in any supermarket but the difference is they come from ecological and ethical sources. Plant- and natural oil-based cosmetics, harmful substances-free cleaning supplies, pastry from a local baker and fresh vegetables. I should enquire about the vegetables in interviews, I already know that the topic of building and maintaining relationships with farmers is of importance to the Cooperative. On the other hand, this place is teeming with other type of information. Taking on a role of a person on duty allows me to experience first-hand what each member of the Cooperative has to deal with sooner or later. Newcomers' duties overlap so that a beginner can learn from a more experienced member on how to perform an assigned task. An open atmosphere makes me feel I can ask questions. My co-worker offers guidance and a word of advice at any time while I perform basic tasks after a couple of minutes. Even though he claims he's not that involved in the works of the cooperative, he's been its member nearly from the beginning and has a good understanding of how things work around here. Learning by doing is a method thanks to which people who do not possess certain skills can develop them through cooperation. Therefore, it seems that it's soft skills, such as communication skills, that are the key for the people who want to join.

Another dimension of experiential learning is combining the multiple resources available in a community to produce a new value. Experiencing the

cooperation during collective organizing of a joint event, creates a space for skills interfering. Such experience produces new bonds that may serve to work together in the future. The relationships are deepened when there is a possibility to experience each other in action. Surfacing and discussing the experiences afterwards, is useful to achieve a common understanding (sensemaking) of the work that has been done, and to capture the value that was created.

In the collective organizations, much of the work is done based on the social capital of community members. Thanks to this, community members can find fulfilment in acting for the benefit of the organization, while the organization can use the resources of its members instead of outsourcing it.

"Well, for example, a bit because I was dealing with this, um, organizing various things in a physical space, just in the space of these stores; I really liked using the social capital we have built up to have most of the services that we need to provide, be provided within the Collective. " (KJ)

Depending on a community resources is recalled as a positive experience for the person coordinating the work. Working with people who share something in common simplifies communication, therefore can provide more satisfaction. Heterogeneity of a community may provide a complexity of skills needed to organize a social innovation.

"For example, people who deal with projects and are architects, for example, I meet with them and do space designs with them if there is such a need, or some feasible arrangement solutions. Or, if the person is an accountant, then another person on the team who does the accounting hires them for tasks such as assisting in calculating the profitability of a store, or as someone to talk to about their account - professional knowledge. " (KJ)

Experiential knowledge complements the cognitive and theoretical knowledge, but it does not replace it. Social innovation is often a part of a global movement or relate to a global challenge. Therefore, the concepts may be inspired by existing initiatives, some practices can be adapted, but always are anchored in the local context. E.g., the self-governance model of Open Jazdów settlement was influenced by the knowledge that existed already in the field. When developing the publication in which the model was described for the first time ("Open Jazdów Settlement. Co-managing the public space". Original title: "Otwarty Jazdów. Współzarządzanie przestrzenią miejską"), the knowledge was drawn from similar co-managed initiatives, for example in Berlin and adapted to the local experience. Taking inspiration from other initiatives brings multiple benefits, e.g., allows to create some shared discourse and talk one language. It is also an opportunity to collaborate, share knowledge, visualize the goals and many other advantages, nevertheless it is worth remembering that for social innovation, the local context is important (Moulaert, 2009). The full understanding and introduction of the model in a new context required the systematic accumulation of experiential knowledge and active learning. Therefore, the first publication of Open Jazdów played a role of a summary of what the community has learned already, and a kind of contract between the participants, in which for the first time was named what the Jazdów space would become in the new configuration. Various needs of groups participating in the project, their roles, and relations between them were determined. It is the practice that shows new cognitive paths and reveals what we do not know - i.e., unconscious incompetence (Broadwell, 1969).

Experience, as an additional source of knowledge, helps to better understand the reality of social innovation and the dynamics of creating solutions based on the potential of the community. In addition, it improves communication, forming a common ground of shared understanding.

Experiential learning in collectives is improved when there is a chance for repetition. Every next collective action brings better results, as participants learn the rules of the game. As my interlocutors explain, every next edition of LABA festival is less laborious than the first one, and requires less coordination because depend more on the ties created previously.

The patterns of organizing social innovation are periodically summarized in co-created brochures and publications. Discussing and summarizing achievements of a community enable making sense of it. Therefore, the knowledge produces from new experiences may better serve for future organizing, e.g., solving current issues, or negotiating future goal. Shaping collective knowledge within the community is important also for the resilience of social innovation practice. It allows the initiative to be independent from individuals and leaders, and instead, to depend on collectivity.

4.2.2 LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIMENTATION

Social innovation emerges in a process of experimenting *in vivo* (Muniesa & Callon, 2007). The shape of social innovation and the results of projects implemented in the community are revealed during the practice. When the community gathers and individuals join the process of implementing innovation, experiential knowledge is revealed, and the understanding of social innovation becomes more complete. Such idea was explained by a laboratory function of social innovation initiative.

"As I use the concept of a laboratory (by that, I mean), this place will be shaped and shape our thinking about this Community Center a little bit anew. So, when creating them, we do not have concepts, standards and so on carved in stone, but we just react to what is happening and consider which way to go." (SH)

The initiatives experiment both outside and inside the organization. For example, with the structures. Their structure was described as flexible, changing over the time, because it depends on many factors, like human resources, stage of the project or current priorities. It is often adapted for the purpose of well-being of the community.

"(We had at that time) once a week, such a coordination meeting, where people who had some coordinating duties meet and talk about what is to be done (in the store), what is going on, what the processes are and they bring up some other topics. And this caused, for example, an internal conflict between people who work in the store, mainly at the cash register, and people who are (coordinators) (...) Simply, people who were in the store suddenly felt excluded from the decision making process, because they couldn't, for example, participate in these spaces. They had the idea that there was a group sitting in the office that managed to figure out how they would work. And it caused a really structural, simply, classic conflict. " (JK)

"The solution was, quite simply, a lot of conversations (taking place) talking about what was really happening and also an attempt to take people off the cash registers from time to time, i.e., establishing a schedule of rotating tasks, so that the people who were on the cash register could also take care of some other areas and have their own decision-making fields and partial agency; so that they were not only on the cash register. For a while, in general, the coordinators also started working on the cash register to ensure equality. " (KJ)

Working as cash registers occurred overwhelming for the coordinators, who had to work afterhours. However, the problem was solved by mixing competences and allowing the cash registers to be more decisive and creative. It made the

flat organizational structure of a cooperative more adequately expressed in practice. When programming social innovation, its creators are navigated by the ideal vision of it, based on values that were set, and goals the initiative supposed to achieve. What happens when the vision is given to a community – it is an experiment.

The experiment conducted in a community, and by a community, may take a challenge of inventing such activities that will best express the values described during the creation of organizational vision.

"On one hand, these projects were consciously prepared by us, they had some ideas embedded in them, not only indicative, but also ideological. For example, one (...) had such elements as an entrepreneurial community, a healthy community, a creative community, a community of, I don't know... solidarity, and so on. And these were certain slogans which concealed various concrete actions. But these slogans, they had a bit of ideological-value power anyway, (...) So an empathetic (community)... well, we wondered, if we were here as an empathetic community, what it means, and now we were putting specific actions under this. I don't know, there were film screenings, for example. There were meetings with specific people, so we tried to fill this big, big slogan with concrete. " (SH)

My interlocutor further explains that the actions taken within the community were adjusted to the interests of community members. It means that the social structure of the community impacted the character of activities implemented by the initiative. For instance, if the community at given period, consisted in majority of seniors and mothers, those groups were creators and beneficiaries of the initiative, therefore the activities were adjusted to their needs.

The final version of social innovation, that emerge from the field work, may differ from the one, that was previously designed and described in the project (for financing or other purposes). The vision, which was imagined theoretically, needs to be confronted with reality, and accordingly to how it is experienced, is modified. However, the experimental character of social innovation is not well recognized by a public sector, which usually prefer the "project logic", means planning at the beginning, and executing indicators at the end.

"This logic of projects causes a kind of pressure, and this discussion about the difference between community activities and other activities of non-governmental organizations I still don't think has really happened. Because I am of the opinion that there is a difference between such community activities and other activities. (...) even in some countries, in the United States, there is a separate sector (...) of such NGOs, from community organizations, precisely because (...) they operate on a different logic, such a long-term one, where it is simply important to build a community, place - not the amount of activity that is going to happen. And the culture of cooperation with NGOs is largely based on such a contract. " (SH)

"They (officials) do not notice at all that the community here is the value. In a sense, they only look at the area and possibly the issues as, basically buildings, but they do not see the social experiment that is happening here at all " (WZ)

The "logic of projects" may constrain the initiative's potential, because adjusting to previously created indicators, means turning back to the point, when the knowledge on the state of art was limited to the theoretical assumptions. Meanwhile, the innovation requires experimenting *in vivo*, and implementing improvements according to experiential knowledge gained in action. At the

time, when the formal project ends, and reports must be delivered, the knowledge is richer by all the experience, that took place and brought new senses and meaning to the shared understanding of the project. Proving previously given indications is artificial and may lead to changes of the outcome to less adequate, or contrary to manipulation of the reported data.

My interviewees complain also for the lack of procedures, on the side of authorities, which would address the innovative way of performing social work and producing community-based innovation. The community organizations often feel misunderstood by authorities with which they must directly collaborate.

"With them there is no such flexibility in approaching this place, there are only rigid frames - this is how it should be - as if they do not understand that by going into rigid frames - this is how it should be - they are killing the whole atmosphere that exists here. And it was heard during those talks about revitalization, in which they said "Standardization, every house has to look the same." I think to myself, "Christ, it is amazing that every house is different, so standardizing it will simply kill the atmosphere." (WZ)

The WZ refers here to the course of public consultations on the renovation of the Jazdów estate. After recognizing the historic value of the estate and after the official decision on giving it the status of monument, the authorities announced their willingness to finance the renovation of the old houses. The working plans, however, did not take into account the unique character of the buildings, which were subject to numerous metamorphoses due to their inhabitants and users, the documented historical value (WZ and others complain about the lack of communication between the offices, which makes execution of newly negotiated rules with one office, impossible to implement because of the

other declining it), or the social specificity of the place. The experiential value created within the community was declined in the process of consultations, and it was one of the direct causes of renovation program failure. Laboratories of social innovation like Open Jazdów Settlement require the authorities to recognize the knowledge they have produced. Social consultations involving social innovation laboratories should be a process in which both parties have the opportunity to discuss, negotiate and co-create the solution.

Introducing innovation takes the form of a repetitive cycle of experimentation. Even if the solution does not immediately meet expectations or is not perfectly functional, it generates information that will be used for re-adaptation of innovation or other purposes in the future. Moreover, because the experimentation leaves room for modification of the practice, therefore the creative potential of participants can flourish. If experimenting is reflexive, it is an asset of the initiative. The culture of experimenting enables the openness to what is not known at that given moment and creates a necessary space for adapting to changes.

4.2.3 INVOLVING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES IN NEGOTIATION OF NORMS

In the researched organizations, the development of the initiative often depends on the needs and wills of the actors, who collectively decide about what is currently crucial for the community. It is related to the conviction that "collective mind" knows better than individuals. The process of negotiating and searching for consensus was shortly metaphorized by one of the interlocutors, as a bouncing ping pong balls:

"as if, as we bounce these few perspectives off each other like ping pong balls, we calibrate ourselves and we come to what is really best for us as a whole" (WZ)

Involving multiple perspectives into processes of programming social innovation provides an understanding which is shared by diversified actors. Working collectively on the tasks reduces the effect of individual bias, therefore improves the development of innovation toward a more inclusive form, capable of addressing social needs of a wider audience. If the process is not inclusive enough, and strategies that impact the whole community are programmed in alienation, for example in dedicated teams, there is a risk of losing understanding and therefore credibility of a community. In one of the case studies the problematic became a coordination work, which was conducted by only a small group of actors in a long-term period. Some of the community members had an impression that their interest is not represented by the coordinator's team, while others couldn't explain what the work is about. The situation has evolved to a conflict that could escalate if the issue wasn't addressed on time. In large communities it is easy to fall into the trap of apparent unanimity when opposing voices are muted. This is a problem both because of untapped resources and because the initiative is less well suited, in such case, to the needs of community.

Involving members of the community to speak and co-decide should be a practice on a regular basis. As one of my interlocutors explain, she listens carefully to the voices of others during her everyday work.

"Well, it's a bit like there are different decision-making groups in our team and in the Collective, but there are also... it's a bit natural, often a spontaneous process when there is simply a need. This need is noticed by more than one person and there are talks about it somewhere. At the

moment when you are up-to-date, for example in the store, because it is so that these voices could reach, you know, from the team's side. But they can also come from members who express their need, that something is missing here, or something would come in handy, or you just see for yourself... alone, that it is not provided, and the conversation begins. And then, sometimes someone initiates this idea, it starts, it is discussed in a wider group - so, sort of, I collect different points of view from people and different ideas for solving it, and I try to derive from it some physical, real solution." (KJ)

KJ as a coordinator of the shop practices experiential surfacing during everyday work. She regularly collects the insights from employees and consumers of the shop. Before implementing some improvements, she consults it and engage others in the process of planning and decision making. Such regular practice is crucially important for the emergence of organizational practice that supports experiential learning. It empowers the employees, produces trust and self-confidence of team members.

When a "need is noticed by more than one person" (KJ) and they decide to work on it, the working group is initiated. Such group is formed for a specific purpose. It is joined by people who relate to its goal.

"The working group on, let's call it, partnership reform, the one that rebuilds the structure and looks for solutions, issues some recommendations... I think that such an institutional support group that appears and activates from time to time and submits some project applications is still a bit dormant. (...) This is my main focus to take care of it, that I will withdraw a bit from such activities on a daily basis, but I would like to look at it from a bird's eye view and perhaps bring some capital to

Jazdów in the future to strengthen these formal partnership structures and to be able to hire people, a fundraiser and so on." (GD)

Multiple working groups are formed by those, who are willing to participate in the project. Working groups do not have a clear character or role. They can be created both for the implementation of strategic goals, or for small projects or improvements in everyday work. Working group may be navigated by an idea of searching for new possibilities, new financial resources, changes in structures or any type of goal considered important for the initiative. Working group may also have a temporary character and serves to creative explorations of a certain idea. The changes are often suggested according to how individual experiences his or her work. The challenge for an emerging leader is to convince a few other people that it is a meaningful project to work on, and to organize the work.

"You know what, I just think there is a lack of such a collaborative system - what I told you about these monstrous tasks too, where the entry threshold is very high. In my opinion, for example, people like AZ, who is now abroad, have a little less time and so on, or MŁ, or other people say, I also feel the need for it, well because I'm moving out and I will probably want to play a different role in Jazdów"(GD)

Any idea to do something new, is first subjected to the social filter. The understanding of the concept is improved by gaining other perspectives and knowledge. The questions are asked do we really need it?, do we want it?, do we have resources to do it? Such discussions create a space for reflexivity and leads to redefining the goals and plans.

During one of the regular community meetings in which I participated, someone has proposed the idea to form a research group that will be responsible to find

new financial grants for cultural projects to produce them in the coming year. A few other people interested in it, volunteered to help and they have quickly exchanged the contact information and set up the working meeting for the next week. Working groups control themselves internally, but they report the results to the community. They are obliged to ask permission in democratic voting, if an activity may affect others. Groups emerge and collapse freely, there are no constraints according to their goals (other than statute), neither obligation to accomplish the goals. As one of my interlocutors inform me, it is quite common that a group is spontaneously formed, however after the first excitement there is missing "something" to bring the task to an end. Another interlocutor explained me, that every working group needs a leader, who feels responsible for managing the tasks and pushing the work forward.

"They must always be the head of a process, they just have to be. Because bottom-up like that, if there isn't... even if it's a rotating role, it has to be a leader who sets the wheel in motion. Hmm, and who binds and motivates the group to act. And it often breaks down about such a sense of responsibility for the process. If this is something that you do voluntarily, it's much easier to get out of it, and somewhere it will become of secondary importance when your private life responsibilities, or from your full-time job come to the fore and there's a need for more time"(KJ)

Most often the leader of a project refers to this position by himself or herself.

"It's not like we try to tell someone more, more, more ... These people just say, hey, I could, as you asked before, if someone comes with the initiative of a specific duty, sure, they happen... for example, during the pandemic, an example from the pandemic, hey, work group, what if we were delivering shopping home to seniors? I will coordinate it. (...) Okay

(...) Sure, if you coordinate it, we'll help you, sure and of course, do it."

(AF)

The sense of agency is very visible in a manner that working groups perform. Anyone who is willing to take responsibility is allowed to take the initiative. The goal can be accomplished if it is for the collective interest. Regular sharing of how individuals experience their work (inscaping (Nilsson, 2016)), often leads to collective reflection on the organizational issues, and informs about possible improvements. Taking decisions within the organization based on how the practice is experienced by the practitioners is useful to support democracy within organization, to adapt the work place accordingly to the needs of employees, and to achieve common goals shared by community participants.

4.2.4 ENGAGEMENT AS A NECESSARY FACTOR FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The process of experiential learning requires the engagement of participants, because "Learning can only take place when the learner is engaging in an active process of building and creating knowledge through participation and interaction" (Sanford, Hopper, & Starr, 2015, p. 28). Moreover, in case of reaching for the experience and sharing the experiences, the important are interactions, discussions and sense making, as it is presented on Figure 4.

Figure 7 Role of engagement for experiential learning



Source: Own elaboration. *Note:* The level of engagement influences experiential learning through enabling interaction, participation, sharing knowledge and sensemaking of events

Participation in the processes of planning and implementing rules for a community is meaningful from the perspective of its success. In order to proceed the changes in the community, its participant must be committed to it. Following the 8 principles of managing the common good of E. Ostrom, the best way for the group to follow the rules, is to co-create them. Moreover, sharing multiple perspectives in the processes of rules inventing, leads to emergence of an environment that does not oppress groups or individuals in a community.

As I mentioned in a previous chapter, one of the researched initiatives has experienced the decline in engagement. On the regular meetings of Open Jazdów Settlement, during which the community supposed to discuss current affairs and plans for the near future, were appearing less people. Therefore, less of community members were participating in a decision making and had less

influence on where the initiative is heading. The coordinators of the Settlement have faced the problem of complains from neighbors inhabiting some of the Finnish houses, and from others who felt like they are not represented by the Partnership of Jazdów. Some of the conflicts were caused by a group occupying one of the houses but violating the community rules regularly – e.g. organizing noisy all night long parties. Their case remained unsolved, what was very demotivating for other community participants. Instead of searching for a systemic solution, at some point, during one of the meeting, the present participants have voted for a total prohibition of electric sound system usage. Nevertheless, there was missing one perspective of a group that was also affected by this rule in a way that would prevent them from working on a crucial part of their statutory activity – which was the organization of chamber live music concerts.

"I had one and only one situation, in the third year of operation, when the Partnership decided something, because I was not at this meeting, so I did not vote against or for anything - so they decided that we would not provide a sound system for parties, and there would be no sound system. And then, a friend from Jazdów Partnership came here, that the rehearsal is taking place here during the day - loudspeakers, amplifiers, because it's a concert with a sound system, as usual, some minimal sound, but we use it, and she pointed out that it is too loud and something and then I said, completely assertively, "Listen, there is a problem, because these musicians need to amplify the instruments and perform this work artistically as they imagine it, so do not talk to me, only possibly with them." (SW)

The concert continued, and there were others, as on the agenda. The events organized with respect for curfew and other rules of good coexistence with

neighbors, were not in fact a problem. SW and his organization were in very good relationships with their neighbors. It was not a sound system that caused the large community conflict.

The coordination team has faced the wall – the solution to the long-standing problems in the Settlement was beyond their reach. In response to the decline in the engagement of the Open Jazdów community, the coordination team have taken some radical steps. They decided to resign from some of its functions and offered to hand them over to the community. Undoubtedly, the news caused a stir as crowds began to return to the meetings. After many long discussions, negotiations and voting, the concept of rotational leadership was created. From that moment, every month, according to a predetermined schedule, a different team (composed of two organizations) were supposed to undertake the tasks such as organizing meetings, running a Facebook fan page or handling email information from the outside. There was invented a model of pairing organizations that has less experience with those being more experienced in operating within the Settlement. Each organization assessed the level of its initiation individually. Moreover, there was left plenty of communication space to support the transformation process, including assistance of coordination crew.

“There will always be this second, experienced organization that will know what to do with the phantom. And if you do not know what to do, you can and should always post a question to the host group with a question, because we too, at the very beginning, when we started doing these things, we were not so sure either - so we also asked each other constantly about these things. And then, as if on the basis of experience and practice, we practiced that, "Okay, we had a similar case before, we already know what to do with that". So, it seems to me that such an

introduction of all the hosts to how it really works will be of enormous benefit to Jazdów. Because, suddenly, from three or five people who can handle these things, there will be several dozen or at least a dozen of them here. A very big change compared to what has been before." (WZ)

"Each of these people (in charge) would need to supplement some knowledge, because I have such a feeling that no one has full knowledge - there is no such thing, we act collectively and this knowledge is in this collective" (WZ)

Rotary leadership was to increase the engagement of community participants and create an opportunity to share their personal (or organizational) experience with others. The new model allowed for the dissemination of knowledge about the functioning of the initiative among a larger number of people in the community, but also increased the sense of shared responsibility for the entire initiative, which was difficult to achieve in such a large and dynamically changing community. It was also empowering - various groups of actors could now take the initiative and influence the direction of the entire community development. Individuals and groups currently silenced or conflicted were called to action and to participate. The change became an opportunity to increase again the learning from collective experience of the initiative.

In Food Cooperative Dobrze, the mechanism for increasing engagement has existed almost from the beginning, and is an integral part of the organizational model. By means of the short 3-hour shifts that each community member must do once a month, everyone stays close, and regularly "experience the Cooperative." As I explained in previous chapters, it is also a way of learning and deepening participants' understanding of the organization to which they belong.

When analyzing all three case studies, one can ask a question - should the mechanism enhancing participant involvement be obligatory or voluntary? Each of the community initiatives would probably answer differently. In the Open Osiedle Jazdów, involvement in the life of the community is not obligatory, but it is desirable. There are no coercive or control mechanisms, but passive individuals (or organizations) are quickly noticed.

"So this is such a question, this dilemma - should presence and participation in the Partnership, in this neighborhood, be obligatory, since I have my organization's headquarters here and carry out my activities here? Or, as in any place in Warsaw, I can just rent a place and not give a damn about my surroundings." (GD)

Then my interlocutor continues invoking the principle of reciprocity. He believes that in order to benefit from the common good offered by the community, one also has to contribute. Reciprocity is a social strategy that allows people to cooperate and coexist on a voluntary basis. Community organizations enforce this principle in different, more or less structured ways.

"It (reciprocity) means that someone comes here, gets something from us, but also has to contribute something, and that we strive to create these mutual-, reciprocal relationships, and this is very important, and no, it cannot be forced, it I mean someone comes in, he hasn't looked around well yet, and already he has to give something back, but it is not that we are a place that gives, but there must be some kind of reciprocity. " (SH)

The principle of reciprocity plays a role in shaping the relationship of cooperation. Neither party can expect to obtain a service in this place without

engaging in its co-creation. In Paca 40 Action Space it is however not strictly measured but it is contractual.

"Its members (of the initiative hosted at Paca 40 Action Space) have a number of hours to work off there so they do some workshops here, for others, also for the community, so that there is some exchange. So, it is not like we are now making space available, and the Cooperative is just working here, that's all. It has to be some kind of exchange. It is not that simple and obvious, but it sometimes happens with more difficulty and sometimes less. For example, the neighborhood garden behind us, which was created through a local initiative, was, in fact, made by the Cooperative." (SH)

Thanks to the rule of reciprocity, people joining the community, even temporary, are obliged by an organizational ethos, to think of an input they may have. In case described in the above citation, it has resulted in a long term collaborative project that has benefited the whole community.

The principle of reciprocity, obligatory shifts in a shop or rotating leadership - these are all attempts aimed at increasing the engagement of community members. Each social innovation initiative will most likely have its own engagement model that will best suit its characteristics. Nevertheless, without engagement there is no experiential learning, and no access to collective resources of a community.

4.3 CHANGES WITHIN COMMUNITIES AND DIFFUSION

In social innovation communities, as in other urban communities, there is a rotation of members. From the perspective of the effectiveness of social

innovation, the coin has two sides. On the one hand, the rotation means constant changes for the initiative as well as additional uncertainty, what makes the management more demanding. On the other hand, rotation can also be beneficial – as a channel of diffusion for social innovation and as a constant inflow of new resources.

4.3.1 ROTATION AND DIFFUSION

Urban communities are inherently unstable in terms of the composition of the community. It is related to the lifestyle in the city and high exposure to changes, e.g., changing the place of living because of job instability (Foster & Iaione, 2018). The constant rotation of people in the community has a significant impact on social innovation initiatives. Actors, their resources, and skills change over the time, as well as the expectations of the community members. Therefore, the processes and structures, the norms and rituals are not rigid. Social innovation is an open system, ready for transformations. WZ explained me that the readiness for changes is demanded by a rotation of community participants.

“And when it comes to these rituals, it seems to me that those that work will stay, and those that do not work will require transformation and it will probably also happen that some rituals will change, because from my perspective, this place is constantly updated. Month by month there is a different configuration of residents and hosts, people involved in given topics, intensity of activities, events and so on. There is no such thing as constancy here, so sure, it will need to be changed and adapted to the new mode.” (WZ)

The communities are open, in a sense that anyone can join it, as long he or she is willing to respect the community values. The initiatives have developed their own rules for accepting and filtering new applicants who are willing to join, and

who want to operate on the basis of the community resources. The most important seem to be the will to cooperate and to work towards achieving a common good. The newcomers admission mechanism is simple and often informal. The initiatives do not intend to strictly select people who can join the social innovation community. As explained by WU, the procedure is simple.

"Probably the only thing, if I could apply something (a filter for accepting new ideas), is that the things that are supposed to happen here, as a rule, do not exclude anyone and do not offend, and that's it. We try to be an apolitical place. Of course, everyone has their own views, but we respect ourselves in this space, regardless of material status, education, orientation, everything in general. And we also teach that a lot here, such awareness of ourselves". (WU)

From the point of view of a person who has gone through the process of joining the initiative recently, the mechanism seems to be equally simple.

"I came, I shared the idea, (...) I reported it to Mary, who was the coordinator at the time. She took the idea to Bogdan, who was running CAL at that time, and they also talked about it at a meeting of animators. I guess they had a meeting once a week where they discussed various issues, problems, ideas - I don't know if this is still the case, but they also discussed it as a team. (...) And then Mary said that we had the green light, we will see how it will work and I was the contact person all the time. Also... we did it completely by our own rules, following very basic rules such as you cannot drink alcohol or smoke in a designated place - some obvious issues. There were no specific requirements for us that it had to bring about any specific effect. We filled the attendance list so that there would be a trace that we existed, but we did not have to meet any conditions or any indicators or anything like that ... "(NI)

The project of NI was accepted, while there were no specified expectations according to its results. No "logic of project" was applied - no strict indicators for measuring the effects were determined, it was not established what form the project would evaluate to at the end of the funding period. Instead, the concept of NI was found interesting enough to begin as an experiment. The project addressed the problem of homelessness by creating a space for cooking and feasting together. The project was very innovative, so far no one has proposed an action that would allow the homeless to decide about such basic things as meals. Therefore, the flexible conditions of implementing this project served its initiators who were able to experiment and freely react to the dynamics of a group. The project was a success, new relationships have been made and some of them lasted after the financing of a project ended. Some of the participants became members of the Paca 40 Action Space community and continued their engagement.

In the case of Open Jazdów Settlement, which attracts large numbers of projects, the mechanism for accepting new participant to the community along with their projects is a bit more complex. There are organized official contests identifying new users of space in Finnish houses, as well once a year there is distributed the budget for social and cultural projects. There exists also a less formal way of joining the community – contacting individually the houses which may host the particular project, because it is consistent with their mission. This way depends largely on the availability of people in individual houses who will agree to take the new person under their care.

"The criteria are ... As we have them written down in the regulations, more or less, and we also have them in our various program documents. But the point is that it should be an open, non-commercial activity that will be beneficial to Open Jazdów, in the sense that it's useful for people

or the second option, which is closed meetings, but regarding a specific project, i.e. a more internal workshop such as the Youth Climate Strike, as it organized the protest, needed a place to meet. And, for example, they had training in public speaking, so one day before the protest or a few days before the protest they needed a room where they could undergo such training. And then in one of the houses they just got the opportunity to organize workshops."(WZ)

There is a belief in Open Jazdów that the openness should be an element of communication. This is a way to attract interesting, innovative projects that can benefit the whole community.

"The Settlement should be open to some more or less temporary management of the common space in a manner which is functional, interesting, revealing, innovative, appraising and so on." (JK)

Openness and small barriers of entry make the environment of urban social innovation a convenient space for experimentation and explorations of new ideas. A diverse environment of a community is a resource that can speed up the implementation processes because people from different sectors are gathered in one place, in one network and are ready to collaborate. The rotation and mobility of participants can therefore increase the innovativeness and effectiveness of initiatives. Moreover, the rotation is a diffusion channel when social innovation participants decide to leave the initiative because they feel they have learned enough and gave enough to move on and continue self-development. BN who was one of the initiators of the Food Cooperative Dobrze, decided that what is best for her and for the initiative in that moment, was to quit and engage in something new. She started a new job, in which she plays the role of community builder - a skill that she has shaped for several years at Cooperative. The principles of community building are in this case an important

element of cooperative social innovations and, as new patterns of action, they are subject to diffusion. As a result, the method of organizing which has resulted in successful social innovation is spread through practice and interactions in a new place, in a new context. Experiential learning process continues and involves new social circles.

4.3.2 COMMON GOAL EVOLUTION

A common goal functions as a community binder, it allows to create a sense of identity, work out common norms, and act in one direction. In the life cycle of a community-based initiative, goals play an extremely important role - they navigate the activities of a large group of individuals, and they set the directions for development. However, these goals are set in a slightly different way than in traditional organizations. First, the goals result from, and depend on community dynamics, and this means that the effectiveness of these goals depends on how well they meet the needs of the community participants. The goals which are not reflecting the needs of a community may, most likely, be left unmet, as no volunteers will decide to form a group and work on the task. Second, the goals are evolving under the influence of new participants, because of the rotation in urban communities. Moreover, the experimental character of social innovation practice, produces a lot of knowledge that also influences the goals settings. Therefore, in community initiatives there is required a practice of regular confrontation of organizational goals with the community.

The internal changes, which can be great, though slow in pace, without adequate leadership sensitivity, can be overlooked. I was able to observe an example of delayed adaptation to internal changes during the course of this research, therefore I will describe its effects on the social innovation community,

and describe the reaction process that leaders introduced as soon as the temporary loss of purpose made itself felt.

Based on research results, I distinguish three reasons for which the goals should be regularly updated:

- A. Goals evolving with community development.
- B. Obsolescence of the goal or postponement in time.
- C. Goals evolving in rotating community.

Ad. A) Goals evolving with personal development

Over time, and as things happen goals are negotiable. When I asked a community member who had taken over as a board member a month earlier about how she envisions the organization's future, she described it as a never-ending process.

"I think, hmm ... I don't know if it (the action model) is striving to some point, because it doesn't have a defined boundary, right? This is also some kind of question mark we have - you know, what we are striving for. It surely strives to develop, to develop this activity and to care for the well-being of its employees, and this very often ends with never-ending development, right?"(KS)

My interlocutors say that it is impossible to clearly define what the initiative will be in the future, although they know, they are heading towards constant improvement. For example, the Cooperative Dobrze strives to improve the quality of food and shorten the supply chains, the activities envisaged could include both an education program for agricultural schools and the creation of own RWS (Socially Supported Farming). The majority will decide which path to

choose, and then, collectively, will work on the further development of the organization, offering their own work and skills. In the case of social innovations, constant improvement concerns the social impact and the effectiveness in achieving it.

In Paca 40 Action Space, activities for the community are planned based on the current needs of a community.

"We do not have a permanent program of activities. Of course, there are regular classes but, if someone asks us "Will there be English for seniors in the fall?", we answer, "We don't know." If we have a person who wants to lead English for seniors, of course. But also, if we hear of the need, for example, from our active seniors, that, "Listen, we would like to have English here. Can you help us look for a volunteer - and we will prepare a description, and you will post it somewhere on your website or on Facebook?" So, we do it like that." (WU)

Co-deciding about the activities undertaken by the organization, enables including multiple perspectives. If someone from the community is willing to engage in certain project, he or she is allowed and welcome to design a new unit or new working group. For example, in the Food Cooperative Dobrze, when one of my interviewees came with an idea to formalize the educational role performed by the organization, first his idea was democratically accepted, and after that, he formulated a group interested in working on the new project. Such groups are quite freely appearing and disappearing, depend on the available resources and current projects.

"It is a very loose group. (...) Ultimately, it was supposed to be like, um, like to professionalize and formalize educational activities in the Cooperative because there was always a group of people who wanted to

run different workshops. We had a discussion club about post-growth that was meeting, we were doing some film screenings or whatever. And at some point, the idea was created to institutionalize it somehow, so as to professionalize it and apart from these, apart from sharing the knowledge that we have, due to different fields that someone deals with - there are different social educators - there are some others, and we have our areas of competence, such as post-growth. I take care of post-growth." (MJ)

Self-development of community members and employees is a driver of community innovation. As various interlocutors mentioned, people evolve together with organization. Directions they choose for personal development strongly impact the direction of organizational development.

"Back then, when I was dealing with it from time to time, it was a position that dealt strictly with the day-to-day operation of the store, and the coordination of the work of those on duty. But then a second store came along, so it kind of needed to be looked at from a bit of a different perspective. Those people who partly dealt with it also took on some other areas, because that's what... our Cooperative morphs a bit, doesn't it? As if you can see that people too... usually, people, their creativity out there, needs new stimuli, right? So they come to a point when they reach some area that they already know very well or that no longer satisfies them, so they look for some other stimulus. Because we are very open to the fact that people can take on other areas that they want to take care of - if we see, of course, that they have the predisposition and chance for it." (KJ)

Hence, important is the sensitivity of the organization to the needs and potential of actors. Relating personal development to organizational development is

supported by the system of emerging roles and emerging leadership, when individuals may initiate new projects by gathering a group of interested colleges.

Ad. B) Obsolescence of the target or postponement in time

In a large, rotating community, it may be a challenge to maintain a coherent identity and high quality relationships, especially as at various stages of the development of social innovation, goals that were previously prioritized and united members of the community become obsolete. This was the case of the Open Jazdów Settlement. At the beginning, the struggle for the survival of Ujazdowska Colony of Finish houses and a battle to save it as a heritage, was the center of activities at the beginning, and the driving force behind cooperation between activists and organizations associated with the place. When the goal was achieved, the colony was entered in the register of monuments, and everyone could go about their current affairs, ties loosened.

The loosened ties, together with a quick growth of the community, caused communication problems, and therefore conflicts. Neighborly disagreements, the unsolved problem of the "free rider" in a community (one of the NGOs was notoriously violating rules), or the feeling of losing agency, have slowly led to decision paralysis. Members did not want to join the formal body Jazdów Partnership, which was established for the purpose of contact with city authorities. One of my interlocutors described the communication problem as follows:

"So it's not even a problem today with the overtone of the text itself, because all-in-all it was okay, only with the way of deciding on its publication. (...) I understand that the board of the Jazdów Open Partnership association decided to publish it despite the concerns that were raised by the organizations. Because that was how they defined the

good of the Settlement and the Settlement's needs. And in the end, it isn't wrong. That is how they define the Settlement and the Settlement's needs. But only, in the end, that means that the union of associations, Open Jazdów Partnership, does not represent us as an organization." (JK)

It turned out that the key goal of the initiative had changed almost unnoticed. The battle with the city, in which the coordinating team was still heavily involved, was no longer a priority. Members of the community needed something else now, they interpreted the common good differently at the moment. In response to conflicts and the decline in the involvement of the Open Jazdów community, it was decided to change the management model of the Settlement.

Ad. C) Goals evolving in rotating community.

I wrote about the changing needs of a rotating community in the previous chapter, but I would just like to emphasize the relationship between community rotation and goals. As communities are open and new members are flowing in and out, it is possible that new ideas, opportunities, and expectations emerge within the initiative. It is a good practice to sensitize the organization to the volatility of opinions in the community. It is meaningful for the effective use of community resources, and it is necessary to provide opportunities for personal development. WZ with who I spoke had a clear vision of it.

"it will probably happen that some rituals will change, because, from my perspective, this place is constantly updating. From month to month there is a different configuration of residents and hosts, people involved in given topics, intensity of activities, events and so on. " (WZ)

The nature of urban community impacts the way its goals are distinguished and

achieved. Internal changes caused by rotation significantly influence the strategy of an organization.

4.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COLLABORATION AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The results of this research show that a culture of collaboration favors the use of participants' experiences while developing social innovation practice. The collaboration here, are organizational activities that are performed by social innovation participants collectively, participatory, or democratically. The concept is further described in detail, according to an understanding of my interlocutors.

Social innovations which are community based and collectively organized, create an opportunity to **renegotiate and reshape institutions, based on the mechanism of sharing and exchanging experiences** between social actors. The collective character of social innovation was already mentioned by various researchers and considered important (Mumford, 2002; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Yañez-Figueroa et al., 2016). The community initiatives, or collectively organized initiatives, produce a space for sharing and exchanging experiences. Sharing of experiences, in other words, is the situation, when "people (their intellectual, affective, and practical characteristics), their material and social environment, their transactional relations (mutual effects on each other), and affect" take place (Vygotskij, 1935 after Roth & Jornet, 2014). Therefore, the process of negotiating institutions within communities, involves multiple perspectives of individuals, who interact and shape each other's understanding of how institutions are experienced. Therefore, social innovation organized in a collaborative process, becomes more inclusive and more reliably rooted in the collective experience. **Collective experience** I understand here rather as a shared understanding of this

experience, than as a spontaneous activity. In fact, the crucial element that enables development of social innovation practice based on collective knowledge, is a sense making process in which community participants are engaged – the process is a cycle of **experiential surfacing**. Experiential surfacing enables making sense of certain situations, and learning from them. It is a process in which new rules and norms are created. (Nilsson, 2015). It is translating people's experiences for the purpose of positive organizing and maintaining institutional work. In the dissertation I provide multiple examples when experiential surfacing plays an important role in collective negotiations of norms. It is crucial for the effectiveness of social innovation initiatives, as they are often an effect of collective effort.

The interlocutors of my research usually relate to the concept of collective organizing with a phrase “cooperation” or “collaboration” (in polish they have the same meaning), which is placed at the center of the stories about everyday work and about the most important, successful achievement of their organizations. Collaboration worked as an umbrella term. It was used to describe participatory, collective processes of organizing, but also captured the ways of being a part of community, in other terms co-being (Naumiuk, 2020). The interlocutors were convinced that effective, deep cooperation is crucial for achieving organizational goals of social innovation. They have a strong feeling of relatedness and believe in competence of the group (Bidee et al., 2013).

4.4.1 DECODING COLLABORATION

In the following section I present the diverse dimensions of what collaboration, or collective work in fact is, according to the understanding of my interlocutors. Words derived from collaboration appears in 27 interviews about 210 times, becoming an element connecting all the surveyed organizations. Therefore,

collectivity was analyzed separately, and considered meaningful for initiatives' performance.

I decided to decode such a common concept as collaboration, because my research brought a rich and detailed understanding of it. Collaboration I divide into four categories of organizational activities: co-doing, co-being, co-learning and co-deciding, as it is visualized on Figure 5. The categories are invented based on interlocutor's understanding of collective work. They reflect a multidimensional character of social innovation work, that is as much about "being" in the community, as about achieving organizational goals. Below I describe it in detail.

1. Co-doing is most related to action and practice. The category involves organizational practices aimed at collective doing of things and engaging community members in co-creation activities. The concept of co-creation was for example described by Skrzypczak (2016) in the context of community participation, when people co-create a service or product for themselves by themselves. The examples of co-doing activities are working groups, group meetings, teamwork, shared spaces, prototypes testing, roles taking, sharing leadership, and involving in shared events.

2. Co-deciding reflects democratic processes in the community at the level of strategic decisions and goals settings. The practice of co-deciding requires that community members are well informed about major aspects of initiative performance in order to be capable of taking decisions. The practical examples from the studied cases are open discussion, system of voting, direct democracy, flat structure, regular informative meetings, and shared responsibility.

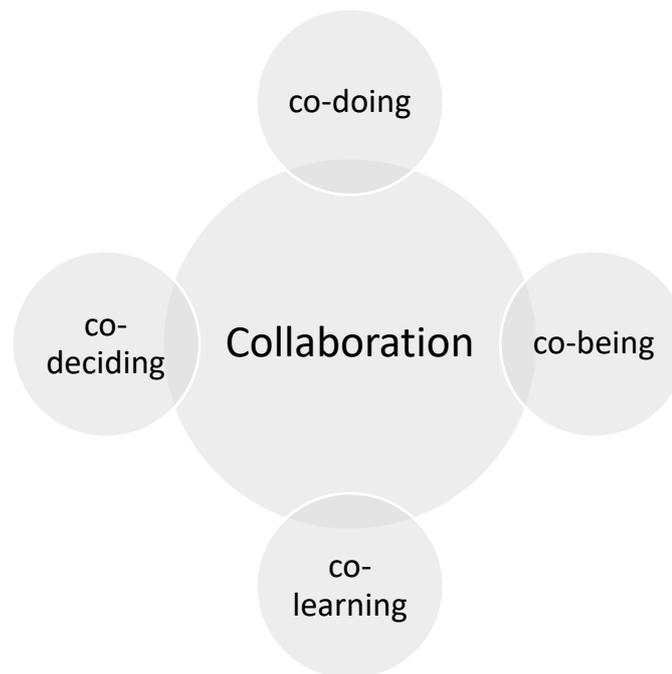
3. Co-learning means developing a personal and shared organizational knowledge. It is a category that specifically address the fact that social

innovation communities are learning communities, and this fact has a direct impact on the development of innovative practices, as well on the style of working within the initiatives. Learning is typical for social innovation initiatives, as the point is to develop a practice, which is new, unknown, and very context dependent. Therefore, social innovation is an ever-open system, capable of internalizing criticism, adapting to internal and external changes, as well changing itself accordingly with collective experience of a community. Co-learning takes place during everyday interactions with the group and involves the activities like sharing knowledge, learning from others, mixing competences, providing access to information (transparency), exercising reflexivity, and learning from conflicts.

4. Co-being is related to maintaining the sense of togetherness, belonging and being a part of something. It is more about relationships and personal well-being within the group, than doing tasks. I locate here also the value system, which takes an active form while it is cultivated at the interpersonal level. The examples of practical manifestation of co-being category are building quality relationships, creating spaces of care, engaging in community life, practicing communitarian values like trust and empathy, applying rule of reciprocity, and coexisting with diverse community. Co-being is the most long-term category. It may work as a „check up“ if the social innovation development is on the right tracks - “does the practice work for the good of community?”, “does it interfere with the core values?”, „how do I feel about what we do?”, “how do I feel about our relationships?”.

I underline the fact, that those four categories do not necessarily exist equally intensively in each initiative. It is rather a model of available options of collaboration, while organizations may locate themselves according to preferences and conditions of operating.

Figure 8 Dimensions of collaboration



Source: Own elaboration

Each type of collaboration has its limitations and conditioning. As well lack of collaboration in one of the four categories, brings some risks for the social innovation communities. Below I explain it by using examples.

One of the researched organizations favors more co-being but is not spreading the decisiveness among all the community members. It rather holds the decision in hands of a coordinating team and discusses it internally, while referring to the core values of an organization. In situations of doubts, coordinators seek advice from previous leaders of the initiative, who serve as a sort of memory facility for its identity and cohesion. The reason why the decision process does not take a democratic form in this case, is the idea that community should be protected from certain elements of practice (like bureaucracy and project logic), in order to support the flourishing of community life. Nevertheless, lack of co-deciding may also produce negative effects. In this particular case, it produces some sort of vulnerability and dependency of a community. The knowledge is less shared

due to excluding most of the members from activities related to community management. Therefore, the coordinators and leaders, who hold the knowledge and skills, are crucial for the survival of the community. Such situation in urban communities carries a risk. The composition of the community is constantly changing, due to rotation of community members, including the leaders. The issues to be considered, is whether holding the strategic decisions in the hands of few, impacts the agency of community members, and whether it affects other community mechanism, like bottom-up emergence of leadership.

Quite opposite situation is in the other initiative, which strongly values democracy, but provides less space for co-being, which is rather limited to occasional meetings, like annual events. In this case, the negative effects might include less interactions, less engagement, and less opportunities for experiential learning.

If the flow of information is not sufficient, the voice of some interest groups within the community may be excluded. Thus, the knowledge about the needs, goals, and resources of the community may be insufficient. In one of the studied cases, it led to a loss of credibility by the coordination team. The team was performing with commitment, but temporarily lost understanding of the community needs. Such a situation leads to increasing conflicts and blurring of the common identity. It also negatively affects the ability to define common strategy.

The aspect of collaboration is meaningful to all the three researched initiatives. In Food Cooperative Dobrze it is often described in a contrast to competition. When I asked one of my interlocutors what is the most important in the cooperative, he said:

"For me, the most important thing is collaboration in the Cooperative. (...) the basis for the existence of life on earth is collaboration, not, um, not competition "(MJ)

He further explained that the will to cooperate is natural to him and is related to social instinct. In the Paca 40 Action Space, the opinion is similar. One of the volunteers tells me that cooperation is at heart of their initiative.

"We always emphasize that mutual kindness, helpfulness and cooperation are the basis for the operation of such places, because, without these, it would not be possible to function." (CZ)

For the activist of Open Jazdów Settlement collaboration is also a motivation to work.

"We want to build something together, because it gives us the fun and the purpose of life - that we build something together, something that would be beyond our individual strength." (WZ)

Collective work has many meanings and consequences for the performance of social innovation initiative. It converts the practice into a common good that must be managed and taken care of, according to the understanding of E. Ostrom (1990). For engaging in collective work, the very important is something that Ostrom describes as the will to cooperate. The author explains that people have less or more predispositions to cooperate and benefit from collective work, however group which initially includes cooperators may successfully maintain this model of working. Norm using players initiate collective work and reciprocate, while hoping the others will do the same. The will to cooperate is therefore manifested in the act of offering one's work or resources to the community. On the other hand, it requires engagement and self-management.

"I think that the model (of organization) we have chosen is quite difficult from the point of view of management, and you need to have some patience with it; and that there are some personality traits that will allow you to function in this model and some that just won't let you because you can't handle it mentally, and you can't stand it; and yet, there are... You know, there's a group of people who prefer to be told what to do, for example. And such people are not able to function in the Cooperative because they will not be able to cope. So it's not for everyone." (KJ)

According to my other interviewee, the ability to cooperate is, in turn, a competence that can be acquired. In the studied organizations, there is a clearly articulated space for sharing practical knowledge about collaboration as a method of doing things.

"I think that people also learn to cooperate here, a bit of ego also dissolves here - sometimes it does not dissolve, generally my dream is also that Jazdów would teach people... to allow people to depart from this system - that, "'I', the rat race, my one-man organization, I don't have a community around me," just to learn this cooperation - and, unfortunately, the education system does not teach us this at any stage- and Jazdów can also be an incubator for these activists who, you know, have a slightly different perspective, can cooperate, can build communities around them." (GD)

The educational function of initiatives is particularly important for the practice of social innovation. It involves the transfer of knowledge about the norms and values that shape the practice. Novices, who engage in practical activities, learn and "test" a new environment and find out if this form of performance is appropriate for them. An interesting example of educational activities aimed at

disseminating the concept of collaboration and co-creation are "dances" at the House of Dance in Open Jazdów Settlement.

"I see it in the way that, as long as we do it together and we feel that, as if we have to put some work together to make the dance take place, then I want to do it too, right? I mean, I also tell them, like, there must be a wider group of people looking at it that way, right? That, as if, as long as we engage in it for the sake of creating this idea of community, it must, to a minimum extent, take place. It means it is not self-service that we organize this dance, provide music, arrange everything, and you come and go just, just as if, using this tip of the iceberg, just not, as if, you also have to ... just like it used to be in the countryside, the whole community seemed to know what to do to be able to organize something there in the common space." (MR)

In this case, collectivity is not only a tool, but also an end in itself - some things only make sense when done together, such as jazz bands (Kostera, 2019), sports team games or social innovations. MR relates directly to her professional practice and the activities of the House of Dance. The idea of this place is to recreate folk customs organized around music. It is therefore not only about finding and inviting rural musicians, but also about engaging guests visiting the House of Dance to enjoy music in a traditional way - that is, to co-create it, and not passively listen to a concert. Co-creation of music can take place here through the lively dance in pairs, characteristic to folk music. The learning can take place during the dance, but the will to "tune in" to the other participants is required.

The delivery of services, as described in the above quote, is presented as a negative phenomenon in community initiatives. It is understood as the antagonism of collaboration, and situation that limits the exchange of social

capital. Delivery of service forces a distance between provider and buyer and produces a passive attitude on one side. Meanwhile, the collaboration in communities, is primarily about producing things together and consuming it also together. The mechanism of co-creation enables increases in social capital (for example due to interactions and learning). Thanks to this, the benefits of co-creating a value are greater than those of passive consumption. Whenever the social capital increases on both sides, the simultaneous development of a person and organization is possible.

4.4.2 THE VALUES MEANINGFUL TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN COMMUNITIES

Studied organizations are strongly value based, therefore I decided to find out, what kind of values they represent, and what kind of result it may bring for their performance. „A value system is frequently understood as the ordering and prioritization of a set of values (principles, standards or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable) that an actor or a society of actors holds” (Tuulik et al., 2016, p. 152). I therefore discuss in this section the most often mentioned values and its relation to community development and experiential collective learning. The table 5 presents the results from all the three case studies together.

Table 5 Values

Values and descriptions	Quotations
<p>Community The most frequently recurring quality is community, a need to act together and be together. A sense of belonging and sharing common goals. Interlocutors very often refer to a vision of “lost community”, which manifested itself in, for instance, neighbor relations based on mutual help.</p>	<p><i>“The thing that is gone here in Jazdów is...there used to be a community here, where for example mothers were raising their children together, on Monday one mother was feeding all babies, on Tuesday another one and on Wednesday another. We shared garden tools, when a neighbour went on vacation in winter and was coming home late, we would light fire in his fireplace so that it gets warm and, you know, nice before he comes back and he would water our</i></p>

	<p>plants or walk our dog or you could leave him your keys and you know, it worked. And it's not like that anymore in the city." (GD)</p> <p>"It's a non-profit organization and we work pretty much from the bottom up, sometimes we use grants we receive from city or the Ministry, but essentially we work from the bottom up just like under commie rule, we get things done, we back each other up and thanks to that it works and has been working out pretty well for the last 15 years." (SW)</p> <p>"I mean the currency here is interpersonal relations and not money or possession, like, we all take care of this place but none of us owns these premises or houses. We wanna build something together because it's fun and gives you a sense of purpose when you're building something, something you wouldn't be able to accomplish only by yourself." (WZ)</p> <p>"Being a neighbor, I think, is a quality here, I mean...you know, it's like...it's small, it's like a small laboratory of relations and simply entering into them is of value to me and to...I don't know, even if your neighbor seems to be a difficult person, to have a good relation with him or, like, how to look for or engage this neighbor so that he doesn't fight initiatives, ha-ha"(MR)</p> <p>"So these are values that are shared, and the work is shared and there's also this willingness to get to know people you share opinions with." (KJ)</p>
<p>Co-responsibility</p> <p>There is a term in literature "urban commons" inspired by works of E. Ostrom. They are analyses of public spaces that criticize the loss of public usability and common good for the benefit of commercialization (Foster, Iaione, 2018). My interviewees on the other hand express need for co-responsibility and eagerness to co-create urban space.</p>	<p>"Because they (Finnish cottages in the area) are designed this way and I think on one hand it kind of sets a barrier to entry and on the other hand everyone feels sort of like at home. Once you cross this barrier, you immediately get this ease of being. And it's...yeah, this too differentiates Jazdów and the cottages from many different places and cultural sites in the city, café-clubs and this sort of places where there's a bar where they serve coffee which you pay for. Clearly defined place and function. And here you just enter and it's like...you've got someone to talk to and have a drink with and someone says: hey, just grab whatever you want. And you're like: sure, but I can pay for that. I mean, if you want</p>

	<p>to, just drop a coin in the can and don't make a fuss about it, make yourself at home, it's your place too, so..."(MJ)</p> <p>"So Nela says she's registered at Paca 40 so you know, a lot of people think of this place as their own. But this, central core of the community, it's already...Because to them it's no longer a cultural center or a place where they come and go, it's a place they're responsible for, which they worry about and when 3 years ago we didn't really know what was going to happen, if we're gonna exist at all, we're like: bam! Let's file a petition and, like, million people signed, we shot a video in Paca so that people see how many faces we've got in here so...it means a lot to the community." (WU)</p>
<p>Empathy In studied community organizations there is a distinct room for care for other members of the community and empathic behavior is welcome. This is a part that impacts both practice of social innovation and social durability. It plays key role in organizational compassion.</p>	<p>"I think the most important thing is to...do various stuff and have mutual respect, like, demonstrate a great deal of empathy and understanding for others, for motivational purposes. I wish I was always able to perceive things as if they were done by people and see a human being behind it and not...I don't know, a chairman of a foundation or someone taking on a role in that moment. And I think, I think there's this feeling in general that...a need that people who drop by here simply feel good, you know, when I'm around in the neighborhood running errands I always say "good morning" to others, yeah, and they probably wonder what's going on, but it's a simple gesture which is quite important here, to me and to others". (MJ)</p> <p>"Empathy, I try not to rank someone above others, in a sense: I like this one more so I'll squeeze him in or they got more cash so we should stick to them more 'cause maybe we'll get something in return and these guys here are poor so we don't care about them, I don't know how to call it, I mean everyone's equal here. It's mutual...I mean, to what extent someone's getting involved is how much respect he gets." (ZY)</p> <p>"It's this openness, empathy, recognizing the other person or figuring something out, it just</p>

	<p><i>cracks me up but maybe it matters, for example when we've got an appointment with officials, Dorota Murzynowska always puts herself in their shoes and is trying to figure out what they think, who ordered them to do something, who's on the other side and it's like...sometimes you know, it's just too freakin' much, like, I'm thinking "f*ck, I'm talking with a shrewd politician and we're wondering if he's stressed about something." (GD)</i></p>
<p>Openness to diversity Openness and understanding for diversity are the foundation of collective action. The potential of community gets to thrive and expose itself as long as inflow of diversity and freedom to express is not restricted.</p>	<p><i>"I think (...) it all comes down to this, that in principle we want things that happen here don't exclude or insult anyone and that's pretty much it. We try to be apolitical, obviously everyone has their own views but we respect each other here regardless of their financial situation, education, orientation, pretty much everything and that's also what we teach here, to be sensitive to others." (WU)</i></p> <p><i>"We also try to be... I don't know, like, for example these guys that come here. It's not always easy on them at home. And I'm thinking, it's good they get to see...I mean, that there's guys that, I don't know, call someone a faggot, right? And we tell them »whoa, whoa, you can't do something like this«. We also, you know, aspire to show them you can do things differently." (AC)</i></p>
<p>Trust In literature, trust is one of the factors enabling effective cooperation. Studied communities display trustful attitude, they reckon with the risk of failed trust but they apply no control mechanisms. Top-down control in collective actions produces adverse effect – increased norm violation (Ostrom, 2000).</p>	<p><i>"For instance, trust. So, when a quality is more of a principle which can sometimes be high-flown and we boil it down to specifics. So, trust, for example we talk about theft. And then someone says, maybe we should have limited trust? But limited how? Either you trust someone or you don't. So we for example make certain arrangements so that theft doesn't happen but we don't install a security camera." (SH)</i></p> <p><i>"It's also a matter of, I mean, we don't have any system of evaluation and we don't really have, like, influence mechanisms, everything here is based on some sort of social agreement and on the fact that we will work it out together but because there is no official document here, everyone can say "No" at any time." (WZ)</i></p>

	<p><i>"We don't really have the power to order other organizations: do it at your place. It's discretionary and there's no need to play policeman here either but the fact we and other organizations gather regularly at Partnership conventions and because we're named Otwarty Jazdów /Open Jazdów/ makes all organization open to this type of management." (MJ)</i></p> <p><i>"Well, first thing that comes to my mind is honesty, I mean (...) when we engage into cooperation we mutually expect it's going to be fair, that we will be fair to each other and never beat around the bush. So, we never start working with someone who approaches us with, let's say, profit and loss statement or with an attitude that something is going to sell good (...). I mean, I wanna start working with you because I want to make profit or just because, 'cause it matters to me to make a living but what also matters is all that's gonna happen in between, right?" (AF)</i></p> <p><i>"(A colleague) has just stopped doing business with them, stating that they're slackers and she can't stand them, they always smart off and are up to something, natural-born loafers." (JK)</i></p>
<p>Social effectiveness A quality referring to a personal social stance – a desire to effectively participate in society</p>	<p><i>"I'll quote my colleague here, Agata, she says effectiveness is important to her, social effectiveness. I'd like to see myself this way too, that we're effective and that's pretty much it, being effective." (AC)</i></p> <p><i>"In a while, something really serious could go wrong at any moment and, and then a lot would change. Perhaps what we're doing will become a laboratory, um, for future change." (WJ)</i></p>
<p>Personal development A chance to develop personally is demonstrated as a value of initiatives. It's a form of empowerment.</p>	<p><i>"First of all, learning something new, so that everyone can see that you're capable of learning something, new skills and not necessarily how to knit a sweater or a cap. But it's important you know it, heck, I can make myself one too, right? I don't have to do it but if I feel like I want to, I can grab this knitting needle and make one. And if you're an elderly person you can show you're not ill or, I don't know, indisposed." (KO)</i></p>

Source: Own elaboration.

In the studied organizations, there is a clear space for compassion and care towards its participants. This is an element that influences both the practice of social innovation and the sustainability of a community. Literature indicates that organizational compassion is an important element that may be part of an organizational strategy. The so-called inscaping, i.e., the phenomenon of interpenetration of personal experiences with work experience boost innovativeness and creativity (Nilsson & Paddock, 2013). From the perspective of social innovation, sensitivity within the organization increases the social sensitivity, transformative power of an initiative, and shapes organizational goals. It is also crucial for sharing the experiences freely and reflecting on it with others. Compassion develops the ability to perceive things from someone else's perspective. A verbal appreciation of the value of diverse perspectives, knowledge and experiences opens a space for benefiting from collective experience.

"I think that this experience is collective and that when I joined the team I was green. And then, I could have had, and kind of did have such fears on the basis of "Hey, I'm green, what will I be here... I don't know anything." And then GD says, "Hey, but sit here with us, your opinion is just as valuable and important as everyone else's. In the end, you see things from a bit of a different perspective and we are in it; we need such a perspective." (WZ)

Diversity of experiences, different skills and knowledge and different backgrounds are a meaningful for a community resources. The fact that one of a group leaders encourage the new member of the group to participate and share his or her perspective, creates an empathic atmosphere and encourage to reflection.

Empathy is important already during at the beginning of community building. At this stage, a person taking the role of a leader, must convince others to believe in an innovative idea and devote their time to co-creating it. For a leader, this involves intensive emotional commitment that can be exhausting.

"From that period, I remember a very important element of this - emotional investment in new people who could potentially become involved and give support. It was difficult because people appeared as if they liked the idea, but everything at the beginning, I mean still, but especially at the beginning it worked very imperfectly. There would always be someone running late, something taking a long time. The fact is that when the vegetables came, they had to be divided into packets. So people were getting impatient and, for example, there were people who I devoted a lot of time to at the beginning and who were very excited and then walked away without saying a word. And there were a few such people. And it was very painful, because at that moment I had to play many roles at once, not necessarily those which are my natural roles. I was also not fully aware of it then. I'm kind of great at inventing things, but also in management, worse with those typically... In a nutshell, it was that, for example, I didn't want to be super nice, because I was just focused on effectiveness, but I was doing it, so it was a big emotional investment for me. You know, explaining, but also vision, encouragement, and then people were leaving after a while, because it just wasn't all ready. And it was so hard. " (BN)

Being empathetic and "being nice" is defined as the task that had to be done to persuade people to get involved in the initiative - still an idea at this stage. The warm, compassionate attitude of the leader is beneficial for collective organization because it sets standards of conduct that the well-being of

community members is meaningful. Shaping a good atmosphere is a task that accompanies collective organization at every stage. Over time, other members of the community learn to take this role, depending on their natural predispositions and willingness. The usual emotional support of the group matters for the condition of community members and sense of belonging.

"The mother of one of our friends died recently, so we took a collection for flowers, so that whoever could go to the funeral too - we give, we try to give her support, we called her to make her, to help her get better and leave the house instead of just staying at home; to support, right? So we try to help each other and support each other in some way." (KO)

Interpersonal bond developed on the level of care and empathy explores areas different than that based on activities related to tasks accomplishing. Community members can count on support from colleagues in difficult times. Their relationship becomes complete, they see themselves both as co-workers and as people. Inscaping in social innovation improves the shape of social practice so that it addresses the real needs. Empathy is essential for institutionalization processes that occur through interactions and the exchange of experiences. These processes are more effective when they are based on deepened relationships.

"Here there is a kind of social animation, but there is also a kind of civic animation which is also a public sphere. A lot of things take place here, like meetings about the district including the civic budget, and also about difficult, various matters; and this path, to put it through or not to. And then there are also one hundred and fifty people here - that is, I think that many such meetings and debates should also take place in such a space as this one. Not in the office, not somewhere, but in such a neutral, friendly space where people can be citizens in a slightly different, safe

form; and our role is also to strengthen them in this. That, when people learn to be together and self-organize for such simple goals, such as doing gymnastics together, then, contrary to appearances, they later become stronger in such a public sphere, where there is a debate about other matters." (SH)

Compassion and empathy in the course of everyday work of a community is empowering, enhance engagement and foster trust. These are the necessary features of the processes of collective experiential learning and negotiating.

5. DISCUSSION

Social innovation, which is transformative, has a capacity to challenge, alter or replace institutions (Haxeltine et al., 2016 and other scholars of The Dutch Research Institute for Transitions). This doctoral dissertation takes up the challenge of summarizing various ways of influencing institutions by means of social innovation, and thus triggering social change in a designated, planned direction, e.g., in accordance with the goals set by the sustainable development policy. I explore the opportunities for the pattern's interruption, where old habits or beliefs might be replaced with the new, according to the needs of the fast-changing reality of today. In empirical research, I focused on "experiential immediacy" that opens a space for institutional change (Nilsson, 2015). I analyzed experience as an opportunity to learn and, therefore, to change behavioral patterns. Experience is, consequently, another channel of institutional pressure exaggeration - a way to trigger social change. The social structuring mechanism practiced within the researched initiatives is experiential surfacing, and it is the mechanism that facilitates reaching for the experience of individuals and reflexive agency (Nilsson, 2013, 2016).

I suggest that experiential learning in community-based social innovations, is a commonly used tool, and there are multiple organizational features and practices that support its effectiveness (described in the final part of the discussion).

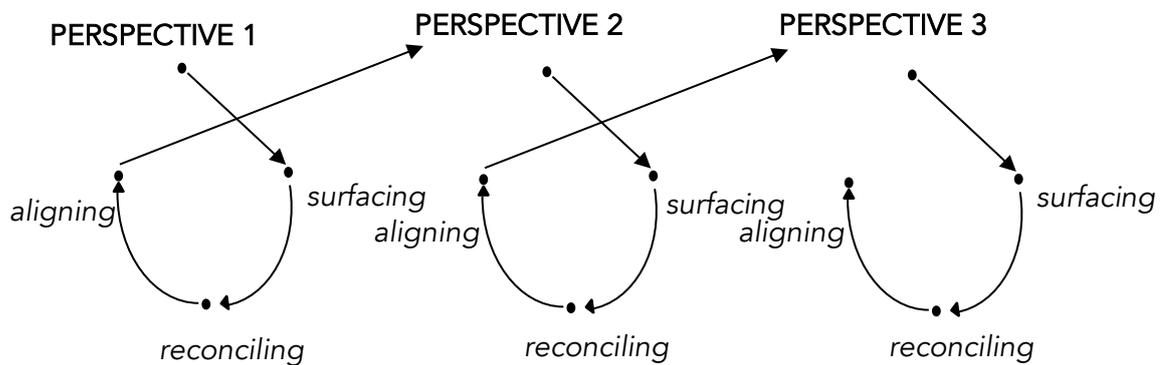
The social innovation initiatives that I have researched, are local communities addressing the needs of urban society. During my research I have noticed that live meetings, teamwork, and collaborative experiences play an important role for participants, allowing them to create shared vision of their organization and a shared understanding of the social innovation practices that they are inventing. Often, the participants have said that something is difficult to explain but they

(their community) “feel” that these are the rules of the game. “Feeling” is precisely a characteristic element of experience; that is, information perceived by the senses (Kolb, 1984). According to the theory of learning, in order to gather more complete knowledge on a topic, one should combine cognitive learning with experiential, and thus learn about the implementation of transformational goals. These two sources of knowledge complement each other and improve the understanding of complex social reality.

5.1 COMMUNITY EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Collective experiential learning in a community of social innovation takes the form of cyclic negotiations between individuals on how they experience the practice. It is a ping-pong of multiple perspectives, an exchange between different individuals, and between individuals and their environment. The “ping-pong” expression is directly adapted from an interview. I have found it useful, as it emerged from the field, and it visualizes the theoretical concept very well. The model presented below adapts the model of experiential work (Thomas et al., 2018) to community conditions, in which the social innovation practice is co-created by various participants. The experiential work (surfacing, reconciling, and aligning) is affected by multiple perspectives that add new variables to the equation. The collective experiential work informs the new adjustments necessary to comply the needs of community participants and, simultaneously, supports proceeding towards achievement of shared goals of an organization. In an effective community, the multiple perspectives are a meaningful source of information, not only on the needs of individuals but also as different understandings of certain situations.

Figure 9 Collective experiential learning



Source: Own elaboration.

Based on this understanding, initiatives form the new guidelines for action (Nilsson, 2015). Experiential knowledge informs the new institutional adjustments.

The central mechanism of experiential work is experiential surfacing, which enables reflexive agency and evaluation of institutional arrangement according to how it is experienced by people (Nilsson, 2015). According to my study, and based on a constructive analysis of the available literature in various fields, surfacing and discussion of these experiences is beneficial for social innovation for many reasons, including:

- Supporting innovativeness - instead of reproducing old categories, learning from experience provides new ones;
- Improving the collective negotiations of norms and beliefs;
- Improving the effectiveness of collaboration;
- Improving adapting to the changing needs of a community;
- Improving the results of experimenting by accessing more information;

- Improving the knowledge sharing and organizational learning;
- Enabling the formation of a shared understanding (sense-making) of collective work that has been done and capturing (understanding) the value that was created;
- Bringing up the experiential type of knowledge;
- Creating a sense of “togetherness” and promoting the emergence of a shared identity.

Social innovations in order to produce alternative „ways of doing, organizing, framing and/or knowing“ (Haxeltine et al., 2016, p. 2), draw on the experience of a practice. It is, on the one hand, learning how the existing institutions are experienced by individuals and groups and, on the other hand, how they can be improved to meet social needs. Referring directly to the purpose of this dissertation, which was to develop knowledge about the role of social innovation in triggering change, the results of this research show that experiencing a social challenge in practice and shaping new solutions based on this experience plays a significant role.

5.2 EXPERIENTIAL NEGOTIATING AND DIFFUSING

Social innovation initiatives have the capacity to re-shape institutions with the involvement of experiential knowledge. They renegotiate institutions so that they consider not only theoretical, cognitive knowledge, but also experiential knowledge. It happens in two different ways. By the: A) experimentation *in vivo* with the real practice, and B) adaption of norms through practicing them. Moreover, the diffusion model which is rooted in the experience has a form of mimetic isomorphism. The social innovation practice is likely to travel between

organizations with activists who carry it and practice it with others, in another place (C).

A) Experimenting

Scholars claim that social innovation practice emerges in a process of experimentation (e.g., Ulug & Hurlings, 2019), and this is confirmed by my research. The experiment takes place *in vivo*, with relaxed requirements of control. According to the literature, the variables are not defined or known before and are potentially endless, as new actors might emerge during the experiment (Muniesa and Callon, 2007). The social innovations that were the subject of this study, experiment with vision and practice *in vivo*, subjecting the practice to numerous modifications in order to constantly adjust it to social needs.

Experimenting allows social innovation agents to incorporate the unknown variables and modify the social innovation practice accordingly. My interlocutors claimed that there is no such thing as constancy in their initiatives, therefore, it is very difficult for them to predict what their organization will become in the future. When asked about activities in the upcoming years, they reply that it's up to the members of the organization who will be vigorously contributing to it. It's the accomplishment of a pursued social goal that is clear to them, and forms of it may vary, depending on changing circumstances.

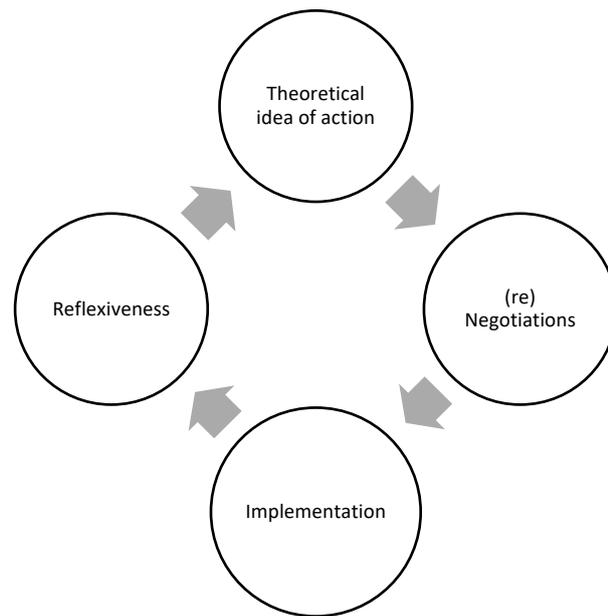
This highly adaptive approach makes the researched organizations compatible with a rapidly changing environment. The rapidly growing economy is an opportunity for multidimensional growth, but also a challenge - for human beings to keep the pace with it, as social change is much less dynamic than technological (Qureshi & Kim, 2020). The cultural lag was already recognized by Ogbourn (1957), "a rapid change in one part of our culture requires

readjustments through other changes in the various correlated parts of culture” (Brinkman & Brinkman, 1997, p. 1). The approach of constant experimentation in social innovation initiatives reflects an awareness of the need for change and adaptation.

Another trigger of change which constantly affects community initiatives is internal; namely, member rotation – a phenomenon especially typical for urban communities. It is related to the lifestyle in the city and high exposure to changes, e.g., changing residence because of job instability (Foster & Iaione, 2018). As a result, the community is in flux. Members of society come and go and a rotation of skills, knowledge and needs is therefore observed. This directly impacts the development path of an initiative which is heavily reliant on the resources of a community, and the goals of an initiative must be grounded in the community’s needs. Newcomers become yet another unknown variable in the *in vivo* experiments.

Another reason for experimentation to be a required form of developing social innovation is that the initiatives offer some new value, often designed from scratch, and the final form of a practice cannot be perfectly known before testing it in the field. Therefore, the emergence and maintenance of social innovation happens through repeated cycles of experimenting.

Figure 10 Experimenting



Source: Own elaboration. Note: The process of experimenting with social innovation practice is strongly rooted in experience of individuals. The practice is subjected to collective reflection by community members and is constantly modified.

The cycle starts with the initial, theoretical idea on how a practice should look, what processes and strategies it involves and who is supposed to commit to the execution thereof. The idea is born out of negotiation between actors involved in the formation of a practice based on their theoretical knowledge or experience gained in different organizations. This is the initial phase and a starting point for further action. Then, the execution enables confrontation between ideas and reality – previously unknown variables emerge, as well as experience, a dynamic perception of practice with the use of senses. It is at this point that the participants have a chance to learn about their unconscious incompetence in the context of introduced innovation. The way social innovation influences the surroundings and stakeholders, and the way it may develop in the future - is subject to reflection. It is like 'holding a mirror up to

one's own activities, commitments and assumptions' (Stilgoe, Owen & Macnaghten, 2013, p. 1571) so that action taken leads to the fulfillment of a set social goal by means and resources necessary for that purpose. Reflexivity is „a type of reflection on practices in which one is actively involved and on one's own involvement in these practices" (Steen, 2013, p. 958). It is a group process where discussion, exchange of experiences and interactions (ultimately providing understanding of what is happening) are of importance. Based on this shared understanding, new ideas for improvements emerge, and the process of experimenting continues.

By experimenting, social innovation organizations develop their structure in a process of adapting it to the needs of their employees and organizational goals. A need for self-development is well understood, as is a notion that one maintains their project or position only as long as it can grow concurrently with their self-development. Organizational mechanisms are not stable in researched initiatives either, and are subjected to modification when they cease to serve their function. One of factors of such change observed during the study is a conflict within the organization and a jolt (Covid-19). In one case study, escalating conflicts led to the adoption of rotational leadership which aimed to boost the engagement of community members, provide broader representation of diverse interests, and streamline the flow of information. In another case study, the pandemic forced the organization to unfold additional structures in order to enhance financial efficiency. As a comparison, in a study led by another author, the fusion of an isolated financial department with the rest of the organization was observed by forming a "financial team" (Nilsson & Padock, 2013). In this case, a synchronization of financial and strategic decision-making processes was supposed to be achieved, as this was a next step in shaping a self-governance model. In all cases listed, the process of forming

organizational structures is of an experimental nature, and it is during this experiment when successively emerging variables are taken into account.

Social innovation initiatives are sensitive to how they are experienced by its participants, and to how their practice affects the society. The culture of experimentation enables them to internalize this knowledge into practice. Considering the failures of social innovations described in the literature (e.g., the intelligence test, (Phills et al., 2008)), I believe that the constant questioning of innovation and the internalizing of external criticism by its practitioners is extremely important in shaping the social impact. Social innovation should be flexible enough to "learn" and evolve, but stable enough to adhere to the set values.

A) Adaption through practice

Change is, above other things, the process of learning (Cameron & Green, 2009). Individuals need to unlearn previous habits, learn new ways of doing things, and adapt to the new patterns of action, in order to go through change. As Okumah et al. (2021) argue, awareness of the existence of alternative modes of action and their benefits is not sufficient to change the course of action. E.g., in the study conducted by Okuhama et al. (2021), the awareness of available sustainable farming practices was not enough for farmers to implement these principles into practice. The surveyed farmers, even though they were well informed about the harmfulness of some chemicals and the harmlessness of others, would not implement sustainable farming until experiential methods of learning were applied (Okumah et al., 2021). The combination of cognitive and experiential learning has shown positive results and has successfully changed the farming style of participants to be more sustainable. Collective social innovations create a favorable space for experiential learning because: a) numerous groups of people can actively practice, b) democratic values

dominate; therefore, the voices of individuals are better heard, c) experience is recognized as an important source of information, d) the culture of cooperation enables free interaction and exchange of experiences. Moreover, social innovation also derives knowledge cognitively, both through benchmarking, direct exchange of information with existing social organizations, and discourse analysis.

The community, as described by Skrzypczak (2016), provides a space for interactions of multiple social actors. Individuals find themselves in a new context - the context of practicing social innovation - where their understanding, knowledge and skills interfere. The interactions enable the emergence of institutions inside communities - understood as rules and regularities (Skrzypczak, 2016). Adaption of community norms takes place when individuals impact each other's perspectives and change each other's understanding. Those who participate in the process collectively experience social innovation and, in this case, experience is for them a vehicle for learning new norms and beliefs. Instead of "carry-over norms" (Feldman 1984), when social actors try to maintain their behavior across new environments and force the others to match them, experiential surfacing allows people to "re-discover" the norms which emerged due to past events, interrupt them, and make a new sense with the involvement of shared experience of a situation. The mechanism of experiential surfacing enables questioning the status quo and sensemaking. Participants learn by experiencing the practice and understand the consistency of their actions by listening to the voices of other participants. Based on this, the new norms diffuse within a community. Therefore, social change is a learning process - from abandoning old habits to practicing new ones instinctively.

Community institutions emerge in a dynamic, non-linear process (Skrzypczak, 2016). The knowledge which emerges in a process is constantly negotiated and

reconstructed. However, collective institutions have a capacity to internalize the modifications. The institutions that emerge with the involvement of experiential surfacing most likely gain the experiential character. What is important is that the institution involves only the perspective of actors participating in the process of negotiations, while actors who are not involved may experience it differently. The more engaged and inclusive participation is, the closer the institution gets to the shared understanding of how they are experienced.

B) Experiential diffusion

In social movements theory, there are multiple ways of diffusion explained, e.g., activists “produce, redefine and promulgate collective identities and life models” which are later adapted by a wider public (Passy & Monsch, 2018, p. 509). In managerial theory, there is described mimetic isomorphism, the process of modeling organizations on each other (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Social innovation belongs simultaneously to both fields, as it usually has a form of organization and it has features of social movement. The mimetic isomorphism may, therefore, be the mechanism through which social innovation travels through the field of practice. Moreover, the community of social innovation serves as a space for social innovation diffusion to individuals and a wider audience.

Within a community, a collective identity is produced which equips the social innovation practice with the necessary set of values and behavioral norms. Innovation is most successfully learned by experience, as I explained before. The experiential diffusion happens as the community grows and rotates.

Urban communities are inherently unstable in terms of the composition of the community. This is related to the lifestyle in the city and high exposure to changes, e.g., changing residence because of job instability (Foster & Iaione,

2018). Openness and low barriers of entry enable the inflow of new participants who join the community processes (experimenting, negotiating, learning) and, through the practice and interactions, adapt the norms. It is therefore beneficial for social innovation initiatives to build and grow the community, as it enables diffusion. Another phenomenon through which the practice travels experientially is rotation. The people, including the community leaders, migrate between different social-purpose initiatives. The accepted and respected practice is to work in an organization until an individual considers it a path of self-development. In other words, the leaders develop the organization together with their personal competences. Once they feel “they gave all they had”, they are ready to move to another place and carry their experience and knowledge with them. What was observed during this research was that some of those individuals who left intended to replicate what they had learned in their former social innovation initiative. They are likely to take a role (or create a role for themselves) that is a replication of some core practice they were dealing with. The new role is an opportunity to share with another group of people how they do things. It is, therefore, teaching by doing. In other words, introducing the innovation to another environment and dropping it to morph and develop accordingly in another context.

The constant rotation of people in a community enables the diffusion of social innovation practice to a wider public through experience. The practitioners carry the norms, values, and beliefs with them, and may introduce them to other contexts.

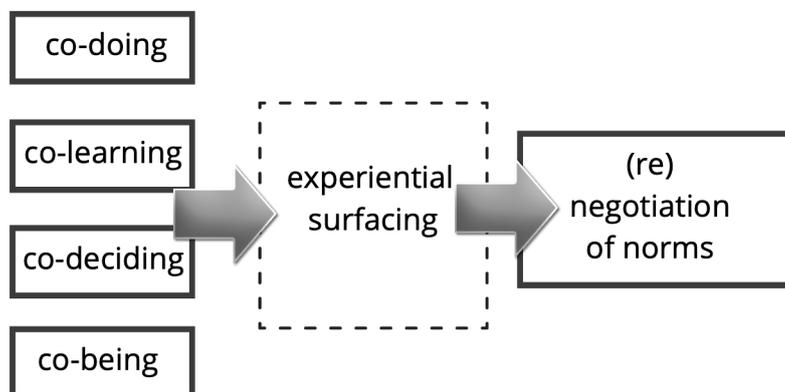
5.3 ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS AND ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN SOCIAL INNOVATION

Many definitions of social innovation exist (some of them are cited in Chapter 1) but none of these includes the aspect of the way initiatives are organized. According to the results of my study, the way the initiatives work on a daily basis and the way they self-organize play a key role in the effects of their activity. Moreover, successful social innovation initiatives are organized by following the very same social values that support the social impact they want to deliver. Below can be found, listed in bullet points, the elements of organizing that have proven to have a significant impact on norm-shaping and rule-shaping processes rooted in the experience of individuals.

A) Collaboration

The collective nature of successful social innovation has already been noticed by Mumford (2002), Cajaiba-Santana (2014), Yañez-Figueroa, et al. (2016) and others. Collective participation proved to be crucially important in the initiatives I researched. I therefore decoded the collaboration through my understanding of the field and presented it in four categories of organizational activities: co-doing, co-being, co-learning and co-deciding.

Figure 11 Collective negotiation



Source: Own elaboration

The categories reflect a multidimensional character of social innovation work, that is as much about “being” in the community, as about achieving organizational goals. What is most important, is the interpenetration of events and experiences. West (2012) wrote about double reflexivity aimed at achieving goals and caring for relationships in the group in the context of effective teamwork. According to his research, social and task reflexivity in balance, is the condition necessary for the team to be resilient, innovative, and effective. Co-doing is most related to action and practice. The category involves organizational practices aimed at collective doing of things and engaging community members in co-creation activities. The concept of co-creation was for example described by Skrzypczak (2016) in the context of community participation, when people co-create a service or product for themselves by themselves. Co-being is caring for the members of a group, it involves empathy, but also bearing shared responsibility for the practice (Naumiuk, 2020). “The prefix “co-” carries a participatory, emancipatory, and creative potential, but at the same time leads to obligations and dependence” (Naumiuk, 2020, p. 58). This way of perceiving community organization of social innovations was often referred to by my interlocutors talking about “community” as a value and a way of doing things together. As Zinker (1980) explained - the group is more than a sum of individuals, action in a group brings different results than individual action. According to the research, well-organized collective activities mean greater creativity, improved problem solving and greater job satisfaction (West, 2016). The interlocutors of this research are convinced that effective, deep collaboration is crucial for achieving organizational goals. They have a strong feeling of relatedness and believe in competence of the group (Bidee et al., 2013). Co-deciding processes enable the creation of shared understanding of events. “The process of team decision-making ensures a higher quality of decision-making because it discounts collective thoughts” (Penc, 2005, p.).

Individual opinions are subjected to collective assessment. If the collective decision-making processes are conducted in an effective manner, one can expect to obtain objective knowledge that considers all the information owned by individuals at the given moment. Another research describes phenomenon of “collective authority”- authority resulting from the knowledge and practice of many individuals (e.g., scientists) as being more credible than individual authority (e.g., Caron, 1993). Accordingly, learning in a community of social innovation, or learning in a cooperative organization, ensures improved credibility of acquired experiential knowledge. Daily practicing of experiential surfacing fosters knowledge-sharing and learning from others at the same time. If knowledge-sharing in a community is effective, members of the organization understand its strategy, goals, and structures despite working in different departments. Experiential surfacing broadens perspective and counteracts lack of appreciation for work of others. When knowledge in the organization is made common to a certain level, it becomes less dependent upon individuals, and is more reliant on potential of the entire community.

According to above, collective experiencing is a mechanism of giving the institutions the experiential character, and institutions emerging within social innovation communities result from collective work of its participants. Norms and rules are therefore adapted based on real experience that comes from groups of individuals, who interact and impact each other understanding of things. They organize a social innovation practice in a way that enables meeting the needs otherwise unmet (by a state or market) and provides opportunity for better fulfilment of human potential. Experience-sharing allows to confront social identity and to understand other actors (Nilsson, 2015). In case of tackling unmet social needs, having an understanding of other perspectives directly influences the fact if an innovation solves a social problem and acquires a sufficient number of beneficiaries in order to sustain.

I claim that social innovation initiatives depend strongly on collective experiencing - as a mean to develop the new practice and as a way to alter, replace or create institutions. In order to bring the best results on the two fronts of action, it is crucial to design a thoughtful space for experiencing, experiential surfacing and experiential learning. The model of collaboration practiced in the researched communities offers a wide spectrum of opportunities for shaping institutions rooted in a collective experience and knowledge.

B) Self-development driving organizational development

Nilsson & Paddock (2016) claim that in social innovation environment “new initiatives typically arise due to personal curiosities and interests. They grow, morph, or die based on how much energy they can draw to themselves and how aligned they end up being with the Roulant’s (organization’s name) purpose and culture.” (p. 16). According to my research, one of the main motivations to work in social innovation initiatives, is a combination of opportunities for self-development and agency. Those two can be related, if the organizational development is driven and directed by the development of individuals. Combining the achievements of people and organizations is the basis of modern management and a necessary condition for functioning in a changing reality. „Employee development on the one hand contributes to attaining the objectives the company, as it helps it in getting employees able to meet the expectations placed in them and ready to take on the challenges of both current and future tasks. On the other hand - it is the essence of the process of self-realization, creates the possibility of achieving professional and personal goals” (Januskiewicz, 2016). In such work environment, individuals identify with the purpose of social innovation initiative, and perceive its success as their own.

C) Organizational values de-instrumentalization

The mechanism which enables the transfer of values into the practice is experiential surfacing (Nilsson, 2015). It is because values, are not fully understood (in a sense that enable its application) until they are learned also experientially, not only cognitively. To de-instrumentalize values, the organizational members should understand how to practice them and relate it to real organizational experiences.

D) Engagement

Experience, in order to be surfaced, requires authentic interactions, while bureaucratic formalization of experiential surfacing is not a right way to implement it (Lilius, Kanov, Dutton, Worline, & Maitlis, 2012; Simpson et al., 2014; Fineman, 2006). The interactions, experience sharing, and experiential learning are possible only when participants are actively engaged in social innovation practice. Community organization ought to enable a possibility to participate in all the organizational spheres, without leaving areas where community becomes vulnerable or extremely dependent on leaders or specialists. For example, in the research conducted by Nilsson and Paddock (2013), community experimenting with collaborative self-governance faced serious issues because some specialized areas of activity (e.g., finances) were entrusted to groups of people who operated almost independently of the rest of the community. "Because this group also clustered in an atypical band of educational, linguistic, and racial demographics, the issue was particularly sensitive. After several years it became clear that this approach to management was limiting the project's growth in terms of overall self-governance. There was no real way to separate financial decisions from broader strategic decisions and organizational values" (p. 7). Lack of opportunity to co-decide on finance not only discourages but also curbs goal-setting and practice-shaping through experimenting. In order to be able to shape the initiative according to the

experience of its participants, the community should engage in most of the aspects of organizing.

E) Shared vision and common goals

A common organizational goal, which is shared by community participants, is crucial for effective teamwork and cooperation (West, 2016). According to my research, the challenge in a community is to keep a shared understanding of goals, which should navigate the organization. The goals need updating and negotiating within democratic processes in order to keep involved community participants who rotate. Together with rotation of actors, the expectations about what is crucial for further development of an initiative changes as well. The development of social innovations rooted in communities, follows the development of its actors, therefore, the goals should be negotiated and updated according to their evolving expectations.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In my dissertation, I attempted to deepen the knowledge on the mechanisms used by social innovators in shaping social reality. Based on the review of literature, I identified a research gap concerning direct institutional pressure exaggeration through the sphere of experience. Based on empirical results and existing theories, I provided a detailed description on how experience becomes a vehicle for norms negotiation, learning, and diffusion in communities and the social innovation ecosystem.

Empirical data for this dissertation was collected through qualitative research - interviews and field observations. This method turned out to be the right choice and allowed me to understand well the characteristics of work of the initiatives I

researched. The research problem I consider explored and addressed, as well the research question which was: *Whether and how, the agents of social innovation, shape the impact of their organization and transform reality?* While most of the subject literature tackles the problem of transformation and change from a macro-level perspective, which I present in the literature review, the micro-perspective on transformation issue is still undeveloped, leaving a literature gap to be filled. This is the opportunity I took.

6.1 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The dissertation contributes to the body of knowledge on **transformative capacity of social innovation** – the ability to challenge, alter or replace established institutions, in a process of transformation toward sustainable model of society (Haxeltine, Avelino, et al.; Haxeltine, Jørgensen, et al. 2016; Avelino, et al. 2019). It includes an overview of mechanisms of institutionalization, through which initiatives and organizations, classified as social innovations, can disseminate alternative ways of dealing with social challenges. Moreover, it explores the processes of collective negotiating and shaping the social innovation practice.

The results of this research prove that experience is a meaningful channel for institutional content, and experiential dimension of institution is a promising space for learning and adapting social innovations. **Experiential learning** of sustainable behaviors has already been proven successful by Okumah et al. (2021). In the dissertation I provide detailed explanations of this mechanism in the context of social innovation and based on empirical study. Moreover, I improve the understanding of **experiential surfacing** mechanism (Nilsson, 2015) by providing practical examples from the field, and by analyzing various influence factors. I introduce the mechanism of norms and beliefs negotiation -

“ping-pong of perspectives” - which is useful for achieving a shared understanding of social challenges and social innovations.

I enrich the knowledge on **social innovation communities** (Skrzypczak, 2016) and **collective character of social innovation** (Mumford, 2002; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Yañez-Figueroa et al., 2016). I explore and discuss the aspects of organizing the social innovations within communities that enable effective co-creation. I underline a multidimensional role of collaboration, which is categorized as co-doing, co-being, co-deciding and co-learning, based on empirical results of this research.

The study has clearly revealed the culture of **experimenting within social innovation** initiatives, described previously e.g., by Ulug & Horlings (2019). Experimenting with social innovation is what enables **reflexivity** on the process of social innovation emergence. Such culture provides a space for constant improvement and adaption of social innovation. I suggest that questioning of innovation by its practitioners, and internalizing the criticism from the outside, is extremely important to shape a meaningful social impact. Reflexivity and sensemaking are in the core of experimenting with social innovation.

6.2 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

Social innovations can serve as a source of information to formal institutions, political programs, or legal regulations. According to Nilsson (2016), social policies that are introduced top-down often fail because they inadequately meet the need for which they were established, or they produce new social problems in an area not planned by the program. As the author explains, the reason is the lack of experiential knowledge and reliance on quantitative indicators of effectiveness. The transformation triggered by social innovation communities is strongly rooted in experience, therefore emerging institutional patterns have

improved chances of gaining acceptance and understanding. This perspective becomes reasonable in the light of recent studies on transition that suggest the importance of local actions and communities in the processes of sustainability transition (Köhler, Dütschke & Wittmayer, 2021). The new transition framework promotes “a selective participatory approach aiming to influence the speed and direction of societal transitions by facilitating change agents in social learning processes” (Loorbach, 2010, p. 2). In line with the above assumptions, understanding the characteristic of work in social innovation communities, might be crucial for leading a successful collaboration.

Social innovators can benefit from this research by reflecting on the proposed concepts of collaboration (co-doing, co-being, co-learning, co-deciding) and consciously deciding on which methods of collective organizing to choose. Moreover, they can improve scaling of social innovation by engaging in experiential activities e.g., enabling opportunities for experiential learning of a social innovation. Reaching for the experience can be a natural element of social innovation organizing if it becomes a part of everyday work and communication – a very useful tool for this purpose is experiential surfacing.

The flexible, evolutionary nature of social innovation initiatives allows the shape of innovation to evolve together with an understanding of its social impact. The more engaged and inclusive participation in social innovation process, the better the innovation can reflect the needs and limitations of beneficiaries and stakeholders. It is important to create the conditions conducive to mutual participation in organizing social innovations.

In the above context, the involvement of authorities could be considered not as an evaluator or final instance, but as an active actor participating regularly in social innovation project. What is important for social innovation to trigger the social change, is authority recognition (Avellino et al., 2017). Similarly, Ostrom

(1990) claimed that collective action needs the group norms to be recognized by authorities to successfully co-manage a common good.

In line with the trends visible in Western Europe, citizens want to have a real influence on local politics. They want to co-create it. It is something more than just occasional public consultations. It is about lasting, trust-based relationships and the resulting new opportunities for action. Moreover, in times of upcoming transformations, e.g., related to climate changes, active communities, networks and community knowledge will be particularly important for state governance. There are approaches like trust-based funding, which specifically address the issue of collaboration between authorities and practitioners. It provides alternative methods of working that support the innovation processes, e.g., enabling experimentation, assessing with qualitative indicators, goals setting instead of executing indicators, and regular contact (<https://www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org>). The transition governance for just and sustainable future in Netherlands provided the following principles, operationalized according to different phases of transition:

- “Systemic: engage with emerging dynamics across societal levels,
- Back-casting: envisioning and scenarios as instruments for change,
- Selective: focus on change agents, front runners to create transformative networks
- Adaptive: experimenting towards multiple goals and transition path-ways,
- Learning-by-doing and doing-by-learning: ensure monitoring and reflexivity” (Loorbach et al., 2021, p. 2).

The collaboration between authorities and social innovators is crucial to increase the effectiveness of transformation process. To improve the mutual understanding, the experiential learning opportunities are inevitable.

6.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The main limitation of this study is that it describes the reality of three cases located in Warsaw. It therefore provides a deepen perspective on local social innovations, but it does not necessarily capture the characteristics of work in other contexts, e.g., in rural areas or in other cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the research was conducted over a period of 1.5 years, in which case studies were researched one by one. Therefore, the contextual data for each case study may have undergone slight changes. Another limitation I recognize, is that as an observer and interviewer, I could have an influence on the statements made by my interlocutors. To avoid such a situation, I employed various technics. First of all, when starting the research, I adopted an open attitude, I was guided by curiosity and the desire to discover the researched field, but I avoided giving in to my own beliefs. I was open to listen and learn. I asked my interlocutors for details and explanations whenever something remained unclear to me. I asked open-ended questions, being careful not to suggest answers or reveal my predictions. Moreover, I assured the participants about the anonymity of their statements and not revealing their identity. As promised, all quoted statements are provided with coded captions.

In the future, it would be worth to further explore the dimensions of collaboration in different cultural and organizational contexts, so the categories I have proposed (co-being, co-doing, co-learning and co-deciding) could be deepened and supplemented with additional information. There is also a space to further explore the organizational mechanisms that support experiential

negotiating, learning, and diffusing. Moreover, it would be useful to research the inclusiveness of social innovation. Such knowledge could inform whose experience is reached by social innovation, and which social groups are excluded. In the context of politics and cooperation with authorities, there is much to discover. This participatory process is just evolving and requires the support of researchers.

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