

Master's thesis in Strategic Management

Radboud University

Organizational revival: *how craft beer breweries rise from the ashes*

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# Abstract

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Studies on organizational have been able to explain how market categories emerge (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983), gain legitimacy (Singh & Lumsden, 1990), new population were formed (Hannan & Freeman, 1977), and why populations cease to exist (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983). Yet it is evident that organizations can regain popularity even though they were latent (Van Dijk, Kroezen & Slob, 2018). In this research the approach of organizational ecology is applied to craft organizations, which became an interesting topic of research in the last decades (Kroezen et al., 2020).

This research aims for a practical enhancement of organizational ecology regarding the revival of organizations. So, the research question is as follows: “How do latent populations of craft organizations manage to revive? To answer this question a qualitative study is conducted. The context of this research is Dutch craft beer breweries. Semi-structured interviews, articles, and information on the brewery's website is collected at ten Dutch craft beer breweries. Data is analysed using the Gioia et al. (2013) method.

Exposure to foreign beer cultures awakened a new generation of Dutch craft beer brewers. These craft beer brewers showed particular craft attitudes. These attitudes made the revival of craft beer breweries possible, because they compensated for the lack of financial resources. However, these craft attitudes alone have not been strong enough to cause the revival of craft breweries. Low entry barriers and a market demand strengthened the positive effect of craft attitudes on the revival of craft beer breweries.

This research provides a practical enhancement in understanding the revival of craft organizations within organizational ecology. Craft attitudes in combination with strengthening effects (low entry barriers and market demand) caused the revival of craft organizations. Craft attitudes in this study show that motives other than financial gain have been crucial in the revival of craft organizations.

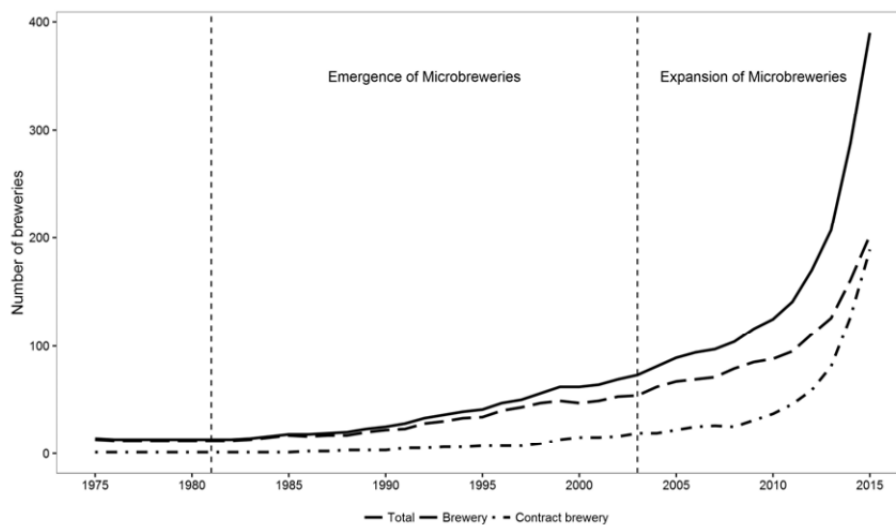
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## Chapter 1 Introduction

Interestingly, after the decline of craftsmanship in beer brewing, watch making, and barbershops (De Munck, Unger, 2001, Wallace & Kalleberg, 1982) forms of craftsmanship are regaining popularity, not only in academic literature (Leissle, 2017; Ocejo, 2017, Raffaelli, 2019), but also in practice (AD, 2021; Metronieuws, 2019; Het Parool, 2015). Specifically in beer brewing where the number of beer breweries grew very fast, see figure 1. Although studies on population ecology were able to explain how new populations are formed (Hannan & Freeman, 1977), market categories emerge (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983), and gain legitimacy (Singh & Lumsden, 1990), and why populations cease to exist (Hannan & Freeman, 1983) little is known about the revival of populations of organizations. Yet it is evident that organizations can regain popularity even though they were latent.

**Figure 1: The rise of craft beer breweries in the Netherlands (1975 – 2005)**



*Note:* From “From Pilsner Desert to Craft Beer Oasis: The Rise of Craft Brewing in the Netherlands” by van Dijk, Kroezen & Slob, 2018, *Economic perspectives on craft beer*, (pp 259- 293).

Organizational ecology is an approach to organizations how they evolve as populations over time (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Populations are groups of organizations focussing on the same niche (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). This theory stems from population ecology which is a theory from biology about how populations born, evolve, and die (Betton & Dess, 1985). Organizational ecology is in this research captured in four dimensions; how new populations

are formed (Hannan & Freeman, 1977), market categories emerge (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983), gain legitimacy (Singh & Lumsden, 1990), and cease to exist (Hannan & Freeman, 1983). These four dimensions are built on six approaches to organizational ecology, which are: fitness set theory, the liability of newness, density dependence and population dynamics, resource partitioning, the liability of smallness and founding conditions (Sing & Lumsden, 1990). Organizational ecology is a broadly used theory to gain knowledge about the development of organizations, however it does not explain about population rebirth.

The organizational ecology approach will in this research be applied to craft organizations, which has become an increasingly important topic of research in the last decades (Kroezen et al., 2020). For instance, in the craft of beer brewing, where beer brewers were exposed to the remnants of craft brewing, which led to a resurgence of interest in craft (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). Kroezen et al. (2020) defines craft as “A timeless approach to work that prioritizes human engagement over machine control” (p. 502). However human engagement is prioritized over human engagement, this does not mean that machines play no role in crafts (Kroezen et al., 2020). As in this research craft-based organizations have often been used to enhance established theories (Maciel & Fischer, 2020) and therefore craft organizations is a suited context to enhance our understanding on the revival of organizations.

Kroezen et al. (2020) found three skills (Mastery of technique, all-roundedness & embodied expertise) and three attitudes (dedication, communality & exploration) characterizing craftsmen (or women). However, these skills and attitudes are shared with all craftsmen, craft organizations differ in several configurations, the traditional configurations as well as the contemporaneous (which shown a resurgence of interest) configurations (Kroezen et al., 2020). This research focusses on present developments in craft, so there will be focussed on contemporaneous configurations of organizations, which are: technical craft focussing on technical development, pure craft focussing on human skills and show an aversion to machines, and creative craft combining best of both world for creative development (Kroezen et al., 2020). Although no distinguish will be made between these configurations, gaining knowledge about the different configurations helps to understand how craft organization evolve.

This research tries to find an understanding in how populations of organizations managed such a revival of interest. How can an entire population of organizations that seems gone

forever undergo such a comeback. This research aims for a practical enhancement of the population ecology of organizations regarding revival of populations of organizations. So, the research question is as follows:

*“How do latent populations of craft organizations, manage to revive?”*

However organizational ecology does not explain about organisational revival, practical studies on the revival of craft have been trying to find explanations for the resurgence interest in crafts (Dijk et al., 2018; Kroezen & Heugens, 2019; Raffaelli, 2019). According to Kroezen and Heugens (2019) the renewed interest in craft organizations is driven by remnants of organizations, which ceased to exist in the past. Raffaelli (2019) added that restoration of those remnants tends to happen in combination with new kinds of products. In creating overview on how craft organizations have been able to revive Kroezen et al. (2020) found three drivers for revival: collaboration through community building, technological development, and innovation through creative expression.

The goal of this research is to enhance practical understanding regarding the revival of populations of organizations. This way our study is meant to be a start towards research explaining the revival of organizations in organizational ecology theory. By examining how craft organizations have been able to revive lessons could be learnt for the future. For example, entrepreneurs could learn lessons on how to restart latent businesses. Next drivers of the revival can be signalled and could be strengths the craftsmen have been unconscious about.

## **Methods**

To answer the research question an inductive qualitative study will be conducted (Eisenhardt, 1989). The research goal is to enhance practical understanding of the revival of organizations, which is an unexplored phenomenon in organizational ecology. Doing research about an unexplored phenomenon suit to a qualitative research approach (Eisenhardt, 1989). For this qualitative study data will be collected at Dutch beer breweries, which have shown to be very interesting organizations to research (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). Data triangulation will take place by semi-structured interviews, news articles, and information shown on the brewery's website. The collected data will be analysed using the Gioia et al. (2013) method.

## **Outline of thesis**

In the next chapter the theoretical framework will be given, containing a clarification of the concept of craft, organizational ecology, and an exploration of the field of organizational revival. Then chapter three contains the proposed methodology of the research. Next the collected data will be analysed. Finally, the research end with a discussion of the results, and potential recommendations for future research directions.

## Chapter 2 Theoretical framework

*In this chapter the theoretical framework of the research will be given. First of all, the concept of craft is explained by providing a definition, noticing several aspects and looking at some configurations. Secondly organizational ecology is discussed, starting with defining the theory, following are the four approaches of organizational ecology. Finally, there will be examined what is known in literature about 'revival' of organizations.*

### 2.1 Organizational ecology

Hannan and Freeman (1977) developed with their population ecology of organizations a selection approach towards organizations, analysing how populations of organizations change over time. Their population ecology of organizations answers the question how populations of organizations evolve over time. This theory stems from insight out biology research towards how species were born, developed, and died (Betton & Dess, 1985). The theory has a broad approach in which the population level is researched instead of single organizations.

In this starting point of using population ecology on organizations Hannan and Freeman (1977) found that organizations which are suffering from inertia are unable to adapt to the environment are more likely to die. They have proved this by conducting empirical research testing internal and external pressures that form inertia on the morality of organizations. In extension to Hannan and Freeman (1977) Singh and Lumsden (1990) came with a reviewed theory on organizational ecology identifying six different approaches on how to approach the study of organizational development, which are: fitness set theory, the liability of newness, density dependence and population dynamics, resource partitioning, the liability of smallness and founding conditions. These approaches are important in the different stages of the population ecology theory on organizations.

#### **Layers in organizational ecology**

Organizational ecology distinguishes itself with its view of the unit of analysis, five layers are identified, which are e: (1) members, (2) subunits, (3) individual organizations, (4) populations of organizations, and (5) communities of organizations (Hannan & Freeman,

1977). Carrol (1984) found that the last three layers are emphasized in ecology studies. The difference to make here is between populations of organizations, which are groups of similar organizations, and communities of organizations, which are groups of organizations that might differ from each other (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Proper unit of analysis using population ecology differs for research purposes.

### **New market categories emerge**

Literature on how organizations are founded, and entry new markets is limited. An explanation for this is that there is no organization prior to founding (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). In order to look at the founding of organizations, the unit of analysis must be at the population or environmental level (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Delacroix and Carrol (1983) found that organizations are often founded based on the resources of disbanded organizations. The relationship between deaths of organizations and organizations that are born tends to be curvilinear, meaning that to a particular level death of organizations promotes entrepreneurs to start new businesses, however when the organisational climate gets worse and many more organizations cease to exist, the likelihood of new organizations to emerge is low (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983). Concluding new market categories emerge from the remnants of disbanded organizations, only when these organizations were not faded away collectively.

### **Gain legitimacy**

How organizations gain legitimacy is widely researched in organizational sciences (Bitektine, 2011). Organizational legitimacy is about an organization's acceptance in the environment (Bitektine, 2011). The focus on how to approach organizational legitimacy using organizational ecology is on density dependence (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Density dependence is a theory about the number of similar organizations in the environment (Van Witteloostuijn, 2018). Singh and Lumsden (1990) argues that "The early range of density legitimates the organizational form itself and helps increase the founding rate" (p.164). In addition, first entrants help new organizations to signal a fertile niche (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). The entrance of similar organizations gives the market legitimacy as mediocre levels

of density empowers competition, which helps to establishing an adolescent population of organizations

### **Forming populations**

Niche is an important concept in organizational ecology in what ways populations of organizations form (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Niche width is the decision of organizations which parts of the market to serve (Carroll, 1985). When new market categories emerge, organizations tend to adopt a generalist approach serving a broad range of the market (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). However, this general approach, creates niches in the market for the specialist organizations (Carroll, 1985). The increase of specialist organizations creates populations of organizations in the same market, since populations are formed by different organizations providing for the same niche (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Which could also be referred to as situations with high density (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Concluding, as the number of organizations grow in a certain environment, they start targeting for the same niche, which results in forming populations of organizations.

### **Cease to exist**

Most research in organizational ecology is about how organizations cease to exist (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). The earlier mentioned approaches to organizational ecology from Singh and Lumsden (1990) are all used to explain to phenomena of organization mortality.

Fitness set theory is about the fit between the chosen niche width and the environment (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Hannan and Freeman (1983) found that the ideal niche width choice depends for fine-grained and coarse-grained environments. In fine-grained environments a specialist-strategy is preferred, where in a coarse-grained environment a specialist strategy is preferred only in a stable environment (Hannan & Freeman, 1983). Organizations operating in a not-fitted niche are more likely to cease to exist.

Second approach to explain organization mortality is the liability of newness (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Henderson (1999) defines “A liability of newness suggests that selection processes favour older, more reliable organizations, so failure rates are expected to decrease monotonically with age” (p.281). To clarify Singh et al. (1986) distinguish between internal and external factors to the liability of newness. External factors of legitimacy showed to

depress the mortality rate of organizations, whereas internal factors showed to have weak influence (Singh et al., 1986). Which shows that organizations profit from external forms of recognition as they gain legitimacy from actors in the environment.

The approach of liability of smallness is in line with the liability of newness and is therefore often researched simultaneously (Djupdal & Westhead, 2015; Kale & Ardit, 1998; Giminez-Fernandez, Sandulli & Bogers, 2020). The difference is that not all new organizations are small sized (Aldrich & Auster, 1986). Aldrich and Auster (1986) found that a liability of smallness stems from a lack of financial resources. Where Singh and Lumsden (1990) adds that small organizations have higher incentives to sell the business, because as a part of a greater organization they're more likely to be better able to offer long term stability.

Concluding liability of smallness is about how small organizations deal with uncertain finances.

The next approach to organizational mortality is resource partitioning, which includes insights from niche width theory (Singh & Lumsden, 1990; Carroll, 1985). In line with niche theory resource partitioning theory assumes that specialist organizations and generalists appear to operate in different markets (Singh & Lumsden, 1990; Hannan & Freeman, 1983).

Consequently, Singh & Lumsden (1990) stated that "Resource partitioning predicts that when concentration in the generalist mass market is high, the mortality rate of generalists increases, and the mortality rate of specialist decreases" (p.169). However, specialist organizations and generalist organizations operate in different markets, they distribute the same resources in the environment, given that a decrease of generalist tends to be positive for generalists and reversed.

The approach of density dependence and population dynamics, which already have been discussed in how organizations gain legitimacy and form populations, plays also part in how organizations cease to exist (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). As discussed in earlier stages of density gain legitimacy and thereafter organizations start forming populations. However, when density increases further mortality rates will increase, which is explained by increasing competition (Singh & Lumsden, 1990).

Founding conditions is seen as an approach that combines all approaches above (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Organization mortality varies within populations of organizations over time (Tucker et al., 1988). Founding conditions regarding the approaches described above vary over time as well (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). For example, organizations founded in times

with density face higher competition and are therefore less likely to survive (Carroll, 1984). So, founding conditions is about choosing the right time to find an organization, when organizations have greater chance to succeed.

## **Conclusion**

Organizational ecology provides this research an approach of analysing how organizations change over time. Singh & Lumsden (1990) identified six approaches important in this change, which gives elements to look at. Organizational ecology comes with different layers of analysis, making the unit of analysis clearly visible. Organizational ecology described how new market categories emerged, gain legitimacy, form populations, and cease to exist, however it does not provide understanding in how organisations that once ceased to exist have been able to revive.

## 2.2 Crafts

That theory organizational ecology has been unable to provide understanding in how organizations that once ceased to exist are able to return, does not mean that it does not happen. Looking at the number of craft breweries, it has been declining since the 19th century (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). In history crafts enterprises are seen in the Medieval period (Heslop, 1997), the Renaissance (Welch, 1997), and the arts and craft movements in 19th century (Naylor, 1971). Thereafter craft enterprises seemed to be gone forever, however a renewed interest in beer brewing started in the early '70s when networks of actors were restored (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). This renewed interest in craft is not only seen in beer brewing, but also in watchmaking (Raffaelli, 2019), chocolatiers (Leissle, 2017), barbershops (Ocejo, 2017) or fashion (Korica & Bazin, 2019).

Kroezen et al. (2020) defines craft as “A timeless approach to work that prioritizes human engagement over machine control” (p. 502). An important aspect of the definition of craft is the prioritization of human engagement over machine control. However, this does not mean that machines are not used in craft-oriented work. According to Kroezen et al., 2020 “While the notion of craft appears to bring human and machine in full opposition at first sight, it is important to recognize how they are also mutually enabling” (p.523). For some forms of craft

machines have been crucial in its revival. An important difference between craft-based work and machine based is that with machine-based work the employee is seen as subordinate of the machine (Ranganathan, 2018). In craftwork the craft skills and attitudes play an important part (Kroezen et al., 2020).

### **Craft skills**

Kroezen et al. (2020) found three craft skills that are: mastery of technique, all-roundedness and embodied expertise. A mastery of technique stands for the ‘exceptional competency’ of the craftsmen in the making process. For example, Duarte, Bressan & Sakellarios (2016) found that a small Italian beer brewery distinguishes itself by uniqueness of the product using originality, knowledge and expertise. These are related to mastery of technique and used here to improve the product and as a strength towards competitors. This is in contrast with industrial manufacturing where the adoption of digital technologies is seen as the most important way to improve processes (Paschou et al., 2020).

Another important skill of a craftsman is all-roundedness, which means that the craftsman has full control of the entire making process of the product (Kroezen et al., 2020). Where in industrial manufacturing operators get the job to make a part of one product which later will be assembled in a different location (Chung, Brewster & Bozkurt, 2020), craftsman have control over the entire product making process.

The final identified craft skill is embodied expertise, which refers to an interaction between sense-feeling and the mind in building knowledge (Kroezen et al., 2020). Meaning craft requires manual skills as well as tacit knowledge embedded in the context (McLever et al., 2013). Craftsmen tend to have a feeling towards improving their products.

Regarding the fundamental craft skills, it can be said that craftsmen stand for exceptional competency when making their products. Further they have knowledge about the entire making process of the products. On top of that they tend to have a feeling towards improving their products. Having personnel possessing these craft skills is a way of recognizing craft organizations.

## **Craft attitudes**

Next to the craft skills Kroezen et al. (2020) identified several craft attitudes: dedication, communality and exploration. These skills stem from a particular craftsman perspective (Becker, 1978). First the dedication to craft, where content is more important for the craftsmen than commercial opportunities (Smagina & Ludviga, 2021). Craftwork is not only a way of earning a living, but it also becomes a way of life, as illustrated by Ackers (2019) “This craft outlook gave these men long-term meaning to work as a disciplined vocation and provided self-realization through the interpersonal recognition of family and colleagues” (p. 193).

Secondly craftsmen tend to form communities (Kroezen et al., 2020). The attitude of willingness to share problems and new ideas is another way of how craftsmen can be characterized (Dodd et al., 2021). Crafts typically tend to organize in way of guilds (Caracausi, 2017; Espstein, 2008; Kieser, 1989). Kuhn and Galloway (2015) showed that the craft attitude regarding peer networking is still present nowadays as they found forms of support in crafts e-commerce. Guilds are in this research considered as a form of organizing to improve collaboration between craftsmen.

Finally, craftsmen tend to focus on exploration of new products or methods to make their craft products (Kroezen et al., 2020). Lamore et al. (2013) found that exposure to craft impacts the innovative capability. For example, in England the impressively growing small breweries are known for their fostering innovation capabilities (Cabras & Bamforth, 2016).

Craft organizations consist of craftsmen showing particular craft attitudes. They are dedicated to their craft and are willing to share knowledge and ideas. At the same time craftsmen focus on exploration and thereby show their innovative capabilities. Concluding craft attitudes are characterised by their positive outlook to work over extrinsic motivations to work.

## **Configurations of craft**

Kroezen et al. (2020) defined five configurations of craftwork. On the one hand two conventional configurations are found, which are traditional and industrialized craft. On the other hand, three contemporaneous forms of craft are identified: technical, pure and creative craft. These contemporaneous forms of craft showed resurgence in the last few decades and however these are all contemporaneous forms they differ in their view on craftwork (Kroezen

et al., 2020). This research focusses on the resurgence of interest in crafts and is therefore focussed on these three contemporaneous forms.

Pure craft can be seen as the most primitive form of craft, which shows an aversion to mechanical skills (Kroezen et al., 2020; Sikavica & Pozner, 2013). Technical craft uses an entirely different approach, it stems from industrial revolution and is focussed on technical developments (Raffaelli, 2019). Creative craft configurations combines both worlds, where having a pure craft outlook is combined with the use of machines if this contributes to the process of creative discovery (Kroezen et al., 2020; Ranganathan, 2018). In this research craft is considered as one concept of work, however knowing about these different configurations raises awareness of how craft organizations may differ.

## **Conclusion**

In this section craft organizations have been identified as a context which has shown revival after these organizations ceased to exist. Craft is defined as “A timeless approach to work that prioritizes human engagement over machine control.”(Kroezen et al., 2020). Next craft skills and attitudes are identified, which is done to gain a broader understanding of the craft concept. Finally, the configurations of craft are examined, where three contemporaneous forms of craft are discussed. These contemporaneous configurations are the forms which showed resurgence of interest and therefore an interesting starting point in the next section on the actual revival of craft organizations.

### [2.3 Revival of crafts](#)

Organizational ecology provided insights in how market categories emerge (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983), and gain legitimacy (Singh & Lumsden, 1990), new populations are formed (Hannan & Freeman, 1977), and why populations cease to exist (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). These insights stemmed from fitness set theory, the liability of newness, density dependence and population dynamics, resource partitioning, the liability of smallness and founding conditions (Singh & Lumsden, 1990). Using organizational ecology raises the question of which unit of analysis to choose, since Hannan and Freeman (1977) distinguished five layers of analysis: (1) members, (2) subunits, (3) individual organizations, (4) populations of

organizations, and (5) communities of organizations. However, the final three layers are most applicable using organizational ecology (Carroll, 1984).

Using the organizational ecology lens on crafts these final three layers could be identified as a single craft company, companies providing the same niche and the entire market for a product (including non-craft businesses). A typical organization in crafts tends often to be a small- or medium-sized enterprise (Fillis, 2012). As craft organizations focus on the same niche (Mathias et al., 2018), together they form a population of organizations (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). The fifth layer, communities of organizations, refers to the market craft organizations are a part of. Where craft organizations opt for a niche in the market, there are also generalist players (non-craft) in the market.

Although studies on organizational ecology were able to explain how new populations are formed (Hannan & Freeman, 1977), market categories emerge (Delacroix & Carroll, 1983), and gain legitimacy (Singh & Lumsden, 1990), and why populations cease to exist, (Hannan & Freeman, 1983) little is known about population revival. Yet it is evident that organizations can regain popularity even though they were latent. Since this research aims for the question how craft organizations managed to revive, this research will examine populations of organizations.

However organizational ecology does not explain organisational revival, practical studies on the revival of craft have been trying to find explanations for the resurgence interest in crafts (Dijk et al., 2018; Kroezen & Heugens, 2019; Raffaelli, 2019). Kroezen and Heugens (2019) Kroezen and Heugens (2019) found that remnants of abandoned breweries have been the base in the revival of craft beer breweries. Craftsmen with access to those remnants were exposed to foreign beer cultures and restored those abandoned breweries. According to Kroezen & Heugens (2019) the revival of craft breweries is a combination of restoring those traditional breweries with contemporary elements to make revival possible. This view is supported by Raffaelli (2019) where the restoration of the mechanical watchmaking is combined with the transformation into a luxury product. In providing overview of reviving craft organizations Kroezen et al. (2020) defined three different ways craft organizations have been able to revive which are: collaboration through community building, technological development, and innovation through creative expression.

Although practical research on the revival of craft organisation has shown revival is based on a combination of using remnants of old organizations in combination with contemporary

elements like new products, prior research has not shown this development in light of organizational ecology. Specifically, no understanding has been provided in what way the revival of craft organizations fits within organizational ecology.

## Chapter 3 Methods

*In this chapter, the proposed research methods are explained. Starting with defining qualitative research methods and argumentation why conducting semi-structured interviews is a good method to answer the research question. Then the research context, the population of Dutch craft beer breweries is highlighted. Next the data collection and analysis method is explained. Finally, is discussed how this research deals with validity, reliability and ethics.*

As identified in the theoretical framework organizational ecology lacks knowledge towards the revival of organizations. Doing research about an unexplored phenomenon suits to a qualitative research approach (Eisenhardt, 1989). According to Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: “Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self” (p. 4). Thereby “Qualitative research often advances the field by providing unique, memorable, socially important and theoretically meaningful contributions to scholarly discourse and organizational life” (Gephart, 2004, p. 460). In this inductive qualitative study, semi-structured interviews will be conducted at several Dutch craft beer breweries. Using this method, a detailed understanding is obtained in how populations of craft organizations managed to revive.

### 3.1 Research context

This research is conducted in the Dutch craft beer brewing industry. Looking at the craft of beer brewing, it has been decreasing since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). With only 13 industrial brewing breweries left, craft brewing seemed to be gone forever. However new interest in craft beer brewing started in the early ‘70s when networks of actors were restored (Kroezen & Heugens, 2019). This renewed interest led to an increase to almost 400 breweries in 2015 (Van Dijk et al., 2018).

Participating craft beer breweries are selected using the database at [nederlandsbiercultuur.nl](http://nederlandsbiercultuur.nl). However, this database contains not only craft breweries but also industrial breweries. To identify craft breweries the definition of Van Dijk et al., 2018 is used, which sees craft breweries: “as an independent brewing organization established after 1980 that produces beer

according to its own recipes, which typically relies on top-fermenting yeast rather than the bottom-fermenting yeast that is used to produce lager, and at a relatively small scale (<25,000 hl per year). This definition includes both organizations that have their own brewing capacity as well as organizations that rent brewing capacity elsewhere, so-called ‘‘contract breweries.’’ These craft breweries in the Netherlands are in this research considered as a population of organizations.

### 3.2 Data collection

Data is collected using semi-structured interviews. 10 interviews are conducted at Dutch craft beer breweries. Saturation showed within 7 interviews, thereafter three more interviews were conducted to be sure no information had been missed. This research is about the question how organizations managed to revive. Therefore, interviews are conducted with craftsmen who founded or were involved with the foundation of the craft brewery. The semi-structured interviews were set-up by a pre-determined interview script. This script (see appendix 1) contains several main questions and optional follow-up questions, as semi-structured interviews give the freedom to follow-up on questions to enhance knowledge about phenomena (Gephart, 2004). For data triangulation next to interviews, information is also collected in forms of articles and information available at the brewery's website.

### 3.3 Data analysis

The interviews are recorded and anonymously transcribed afterwards. Using the transcripts, the interviews are analysed using the Gioia et al. (2013) method. First of all, statements are labelled with concepts stated by the interviewee. Second these concepts are distributed among different themes, to gain more structure in the data. In finalizing the analysis, the different themes will be divided to aggregate dimensions. Using these dimensions statements are scored and the most important statements are used in the results chapter. The most interesting statements are shown in the text.

### 3.4 Validity & Reliability

Academic research comes with concerns about validity and reliability (Eisenhardt, 1989). Internal validity refers to the extent whether the research accurately represents the collected

data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In order to present the collected data in a correct manner, the Gioia (2013) method has been used. Next the data was collected by a pre-determined semi-structured interview script, drafted from insight discussed in the theoretical framework, External validity refers to the generalizability of this research to another context or setting (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). External validity is enhanced executing a sufficient number of interviews, saturation was shown at seven interviews, eventually 10 interviews were conducted Also, this research has been strict in selecting participants as they must meet the pre-determined definition of a craft brewery. However, this research is focussed on specific craft organizations, by providing a broad background about craft and the specific research context craft breweries, researchers can decide whether this research is applicable to their research context.

Golafshani (2003) states that “To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial.” In this research trustworthiness is taken by showing every step of the process. The conducted interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards. Using these transcriptions, the data has been analysed using the goiai method, which is shown in the next chapter. Finally, will be thoroughly discussed how the results let to the main findings of this research.

### 3.5 Research ethics

In this research, ethics are conformed in several ways. First of all, the researcher signed a research integrity form committing to Radboud University standards regarding maintaining integrity in science. Being a Radboud University MSc student comes with a particular role in the research field, which is not used in unethical ways. Next participants in this research have several rights, for instance: transparency of research goals, freedom to withdraw from the research at any time, guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity (if wanted), receive results and implications how findings can be applied to the organization. Especially anonymity of the participants is covered. Recordings of interviews are deleted after the recording has unanimously been transcribed.

## Chapter 4 Results

*This chapter is leading towards answering the research question: How do latent populations of organizations manage to revive? The collected data is analysed and discussed in four main topics. The first topic is about where their interest in beer brewing stems from. Secondly there is discussed how they learnt brewing. Then reasons for grounding an official brewery are given and finally a picture is painted in how revival was made possible.*

Data has been collected at ten Dutch beer breweries. The data is analysed using the Gioia et al. (2013) method as shown below. This analysis has shown four particular sections in answering the research question. In this chapter the sections are discussed using the 2<sup>nd</sup> order themes.

Figure 2: Data analysis

First order concepts	Second order themes	Aggregate dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interest in specialty beers</li> <li>▪ Drinking specialty beers</li> <li>▪ Sharing specialty beer experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specialty beers lover</li> </ul>	Where does the interest stem from?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exposure to Belgium beer</li> <li>▪ Exposure to German / Swedish / American beer</li> <li>▪ Foreign beer in the Netherlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exposure to foreign beer cultures</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beer brewing tradition within the family</li> <li>▪ Brewing family</li> <li>▪ Family-brewery</li> <li>▪ Old receipts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Beer brewing tradition within families</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brewing beer is easy</li> <li>▪ Just do it</li> <li>▪ Trial &amp; error</li> <li>▪ Add flavours</li> <li>▪ Started with a brewing kit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trial &amp; error</li> </ul>	Learn how to brew
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge found on the internet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Beer brewing knowledge on the internet</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brewing classes at guild</li> <li>▪ Learning at another brewery</li> <li>▪ Learning from other brewers</li> <li>▪ Workshop beer brewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brewing classes</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A growing craft beer market</li> <li>▪ Larger target group</li> <li>▪ Emergence specialty beers</li> <li>▪ Demand for experience</li> <li>▪ Cafes asking for specialty beers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current trend on specialty beers</li> </ul>	Why commercial?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First local brewery</li> <li>▪ Use local image</li> <li>▪ Selling products locally is easier</li> <li>▪ Local ingredients</li> <li>▪ Sales in the region</li> <li>▪ Demand for local products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demand for local beers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus on quality beers</li> <li>▪ Good beer, traditional brewed</li> <li>▪ Too little craft beer in the Netherlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demand for qualitative specialty beers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adapting new ingredients</li> <li>▪ Against adapting weird ingredients</li> <li>▪ Trying a lot of different flavours / Untappd</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Untappd community</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beers are sold well</li> <li>▪ Popular by customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growing sales</li> </ul>	How was it made possible?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No salary</li> <li>▪ Brewing on this scale is not profitable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not profitable</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brewing in combination with catering industry</li> <li>▪ Brewing in combination with workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brewing in combination with other activities</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hobby</li> <li>▪ Brewing with friends</li> <li>▪ Own identity</li> <li>▪ Experimenting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Craft attitudes</li> </ul>	

#### 4.1 Interest in beer brewing

In the first place, all participants stated that they simply love beer. This interest does not stem from the last couple of years as stated

*“So, around 10 years ago we were already drinking specialty beers with a small group of friends. This happened in the cafés, like the ones here in Den Bosch. Those cafés were known for being a place where people would go to drink the specialty beers.”*

Characterizing is that is explicitly mentioned that they were drinking with friends, as it seems an important element in experiencing specialty beers.

*“I was one of the first people in my group of friends who decided to serve specialty beers to the visitors during birthday parties, instead of just buying 10 crates of beer.”*

Elaborating on this love for specialty beers is that these men were exposed to foreign beer cultures. Especially the Belgium beers were appreciated.

*“Well, we got inspired during our stay in Belgium. We came in touch with Maredsous and we were sitting at a monastery because we had visited that place and we actually quite liked the taste of it.”*

Even though Belgium is seen as a ‘Walhalla’ for the Dutch specialty beer lovers, the other beer cultures are experienced as well. In the semi-structured interviews the exposure to beer cultures in America was mentioned. England, Denmark, Germany and Sweden were mentioned as well. Nonetheless also in the Netherlands styles other than pilsener showed up. *“I knew the time that a keg of Palm entered the, well that was a special event to the most of us”* This exposure to more rich beer cultures than the Dutch pilsener culture encouraged some Dutch men in a renewed quest to other beer styles.

This new quest, however, was also fuelled by a long beer brewing tradition within families. For one respondent this beer brewing tradition goes all the way back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and others shortly thereafter. Beer brewing appears to be a craft passed on from generation to generation.

*“The beer brewing has been in the family for ages. Back in 1826 our great grandfather Leonardus started a brewery, which later became the Brouwershoeve in Nistelrode. In 1844 Theodorus took over the brewery and not long after that Johanna den Brouwer took over the company. The family name Den Brouwer had been permanently established in the village Nistlerode at that time.”*

Summarizing a wide interest in specialty beers other than pilseners was restored by a group of beer lovers exposed to foreign more rich beer cultures. On top of that beer brewing has been a tradition in some families for centuries.

#### 4.2 Beer lovers learn to brew

A new interest in specialty beers was born, nevertheless a beer lover is not immediately a decent beer brewer. First steps in beer brewing have been with self-brewing starter kits for multiple brewers. These starter kits helped brewers to start brewing in an accessible way. Starting brewing on this scale aroused interest in more beer brewing.

*“My wife once got me one from HEMA, this sort of self-brew package. She doesn’t remember what she had given me back then.”*

Using these starter kits, beginning beer brewers started brewing and just tried to come up with good beer. Which is in line with another widely used concept in beer brewing, which is trial and error. Using this approach brewers are trying to learn themselves how to create their beers and simultaneously investigating what went wrong and how they can improve their beers. It is characterized by an attitude of just try and see where it takes you.

*“You wonder why you don’t get the outcome you had expected. After that you need to find out where it went wrong, did I forget something and what is happening. Why does this beer get sour after three weeks. Because why doesn’t it taste like a banana or a clove. That’s what it’s all about, figuring out why things go wrong. That’s way more interesting, way better than everything falling into place during the first try.”*

A sidenote is that developments regarding the internet have made it a lot easier to start brewing at home. Information on beer brewing is widely available and used by starting, but also by more advanced brewers. Information on the internet is used for the basics of beer brewing and learning the process but is more often used in a brewer's quest of improving their beers and solving problems.

*“Well, yes thankfully there’s the internet. When you’re busy brewing beer and things don’t work out the way you’d like, then you need to figure out what happened and why. For example, how can you improve the foam collar? How do I get my carbon dioxide consistently? You need to figure all these things out. It’s a lot of work and the internet is a big help with finding the answers to all your questions.”*

Next to the trend of using the internet, still more traditional ways of learning beer brewing exist. For example, brewers follow brewing classes at beer brewing guilds. But also, more professional classes like the cursus master in beer brewing are followed, and also there in the influence of the Belgium beer culture is seen as respondents took this class in Belgium.

*“Well, now my son and daughter followed the a class in master of beer brewing in Belgium.”*

Through developments like the rise of beer brewing starter kits and widely available information on beer brewing on the internet, new beer brewers have been able to learn the craft of beer brewing independently. In addition, the traditional beer brewing classes enhances this knowledge. This way a new generation of craft beer brewers has been born.

### 4.3 Why going commercial?

In order to explain why so many beer breweries were founded in the last decade, the new born brewers were asked why they founded an official brewery. First of all, they mentioned the current hype on specialty beers. The craft beer market is growing, and beer brewers are stepping in. Brewers noted that in this growing market, there was a lack of new craft specialty beers.

*“Yes the trend is that there was just too little craft beer in The Netherlands. Or at least innovative craft beers, of course you’ve got the mills and all of that. But the new way of brewing had not been used yet.”*

Contributed to the rise of specialty beers is that specialty beers tend to appeal to a different target group than the Pilsener. Multiple respondents state that people, who did not like pilseners, do like their specialty beers. This way specialty beers helps growing the overall beer market. Brewers especially notice women as a new target group for beers.

*“Something I noticed was that there was a growing group of women who started drinking, but who were not into beer. However they do like taste development of the beer.”*

Beer brewers noticed a growing demand for specialty beers and entered the market by founding their own breweries. A shift in the market is happening where people start drinking specialty beers during a relaxing evening in a setting where they enjoy the moment and the pilsener is being consumed at parties. In this moment of happiness brewers noticed a demand for high quality beers with a rich taste, which also is the beer they want to brew.

*“That’s why our focus will always be quality, quality, quality. I think we’re making beer. We’re not careful with the use of ingredients, so I believe that’s the reason why our beer contains such a rich taste. Besides that, I believe that we’ve created beer with a full flavour. So you can definitely state that we’ve created some high quality beer.”*

The growing trend on specialty beers motivates brewers to start their own brewery. Another current trend is the demand for local products. Having one of the first local beers in the region, it is not very hard to get your product in local restaurants or shops. In some cases shops asked brewers if they could sell their beer, so badly they wanted to sell the local beer.

*“Meanwhile there have been added a few others. However, the first, the HEMA, requested the beer from Apeldoorn.”*

Respondents are not very surprised by this development, because they see that local products are trending. Selling their products in their region is way easier than outside their region. As one of the respondents stated, “Everything branded locally sells in that region”. Which is one of the reasons why most respondents sell their beer locally.

*“Look, it’s obvious that your product sells the best in the local neighbourhood, so close by. People have sympathy for you, so it’s easier to sell your product to familiar faces. The further you get into the brewing business, the harder it gets to sell the products.”*

Starting breweries are well-informed on these developments as many of them used characteristics of the region in their brands.

*“Almost everyone has a connection with the Veluwe. A while ago I suggested to get the Veluwe part off it. But you should never do that, never get rid of it. So make up something else, because we need to keep that Veluwe part the way it is right now.”*

On top of that some breweries add local ingredients in their beers, to give the customer the optimal local experience.

*“I’ve responded to that, by using the local beekeepers’ honey.”*

Another development in the market, causing an increase in the demand of specialty beers, is the ‘Untappd community’. Untappd is an app where users can share their experiences with others and rate the beers they have drunk. Mentioned by breweries is that this app triggers beer consumers to try more different types of beers instead of ordering a beer they like multiple times.

*“Yes, we’ve seen that with Untappd. The people drink one beer, check it off their list and move on to the next sort of beer. The Untappd visitors don’t come here with the intention to stick to just one kind of beer during the entire evening, no their goals is to try as many different flavours as possible.”*

Consumers trying all different kinds, creates opportunities for beer breweries to get customers acquainted with their beers. Customers trying all kinds of beers mean that they don’t stick to bigger brands, but also try new local beers. Another thing seen in the ‘untappd movement’ is the demand for all crazy beers. In line with this development some beer breweries use unusual ingredients in their beers to attract attention in the growing market.

*“We were thinking ‘what makes the Netherlands famous?’ What’s something The Netherlands is known for? The answer is weed. So why not put weed in beer and use it as a new form of hop.?”*

The final reason for starting their own brewery is a countermovement to industrial beer brewing. Some big players in the Dutch beer market faded away the rich beer history and replaced it by industrial made pilsener. However the last decades a renewed interest in other beers has been shown. Characterizing for interviewed beer brewers is an alienation to industrial brewed beer and their appreciation for craft brewed beer.

*“So, you can compare it a Shell Moerdijk or something. With an operator which is in there. They’ve been using a lot of kettles and you can see a lot of lights shining. There’s not way they’ve got anything to do with the beer.”*

The movement against industrial brewing and appreciation for craft beers have been one of the reasons the restore old breweries. As restoring an old brewery especially fits with a craft outlook.

Summarizing, brewers founded official breweries, because they saw a current trend around specialty beers. This trend was made possible by appealing to a different target group. This new target group is reached by offering another experience characterized by high quality beers with rich flavours. Another trend exploited by breweries is the demand for local products, leading to lots more different beers. Which is in line with the Untappd community, asking for a lot of different beers. Finally craft brewers founded breweries as countermovement to industrial brewed beers.

#### 4.4 Importance of craft attitudes

In the previous section is discussed what factors led to founding the breweries. In this section will be discussed what made this revival of breweries made possible. In line with the current trend on specialty beers craft breweries experience growing sales. In general, the beers are sold beyond expectation and the new breweries are popular in their region.

*“If I had had two more orders, I would’ve sold out in December. So you can say we’ve had quite a jump start.”*

However, many of these breweries seem not to be that profitable. Some of the respondents explicitly mentioned that brewing on this scale is not profitable.

*“Well, you know if there’s something you can’t make money with, it’s a small brewery. There’s just no way you can make good money with this kind of work.”*

Other brewers stated more implicitly that their brewery is not a cash cow by mentioning that they do not earn a salary for work in the brewery.

*“But we haven’t discussed the salaries yet. We just never made enough to get something out of it.”*

In order to increase revenue breweries combined brewing with catering industry.

*“The breweries have been extended by now with an inn, a terrace, a restaurant, hotel, a conference hall, party rooms and beautiful inside gardens where you have the opportunity to have a wonderful stay.”*

This way they have one selling point with huge margin on their beers, by cutting the middleman. Other breweries start offering brewing workshops. In addition respondents stated that they like offering the brewing workshops, as they are willing to share their brewing knowledge.

*“In my opinion the workshops have been the most fun, because you get to learn how to create something new by combining multiple elements together with others and you also get to be the teacher in certain ways.”*

Which brings us to an even more important way of how breweries manage to revive, which is that brewers simply like to brew. They see brewing as a hobby. Many of them started brewing as hobby next to their work and appointed one day of the week for brewing. Multiple brewers liked it to spend time brewing with friends.

*“We’ve started beer brewing as an alternative for the Thursdays at the tennis court. Instead of being sporty we started brewing beer and we actually quite liked that alternative.”*

Every brewer in this sample showed passion for their beers, as it was their creation. Brewers are proud of what they made. Nevertheless the brewers go their own way. They develop beer to their own taste and thereby create an own identity.

*“Our slogan is low and alcohol with a rich taste. All the beers we’ve created are around 5%. We’ve got the Tirus, which is a session triple beer. That one is 6,5%. That’s not for everyone though and of course it doesn’t have to be, because there’s no way I’m able to brew that amount of beer.”*

Within the beers they like, brewers keep experimenting to improve their beers and create new ones.

*“Besides that we’ve got the experimenting of course. Like what happens when you do this or add that? If you decide to drink a beer at our place, for example a dubbel, and you decide to return 3 months later and order that same exact beer, you’ll notice that it tastes differently. This is because we keep developing our beers and try to make it better. So every time we’ve made a beer, we check what exactly we’ve made and try to development a better and newer version every time.”*

Brewers obvious like experimenting in the process of beer brewing and see how it influences the taste. As mentioned by some brewers experimenting and the development of their beers is a thing why the stay interested in brewing.

So despite growing sales, craft breweries tend to be unprofitable. Somehow the revival of these organizations was made possible. Craft breweries combine brewing with cafes, restaurants of offering workshops. On top of that brewers who did not start the brewery for money and just liked brewing made the revival of craft breweries possible.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been building up towards answering the research question: How did latent organizations manage to ‘revive? To answer this question four main topics were addressed. First of all, the origin of interest for beer brewing was examined. Second there is diving into the question how they learnt brewing. Afterwards reasons are given why beer brewers founded official breweries and eventually some thought about how this was made possible.

The renewed interest in specialty beers started with people who just liked beers. They have been exposed to more rich beer cultures abroad. In combination with some beer brewing families, who have been brewing for ages, a group of people, who are interested in more variations of beer other than pilsener, was formed.

And they started brewing, by using self-brewing kits and the concept of trial and error. The development of widely available information has been a key element. Brewers getting the possibility of acquainting lots of information on the internet lowered the entry barriers to start brewing. People started brewing at home and by using instructions from the internet they developed their beers, and a new generation of beer brewers was born.

Many brewers of the new generation started an official brewery and thereby rebirth of craft beer breweries is seen. This rebirth was made possible by trends in the market. Brewers signalized trends regarding a growing specialty beer market, a growing target group because of more qualitative beers and request for local products. These trends caused a demand for craft breweries and caused the rebirth of craft brewery organizations.

However, these organizations do not seem to be very profitable. The rebirth of these organizations is not driven by profit motive but strengthened by typical craft attitudes. Working in the organization is seen as a hobby, they enjoy experimenting with new receipts and work together.

#### 4.6 conceptual model

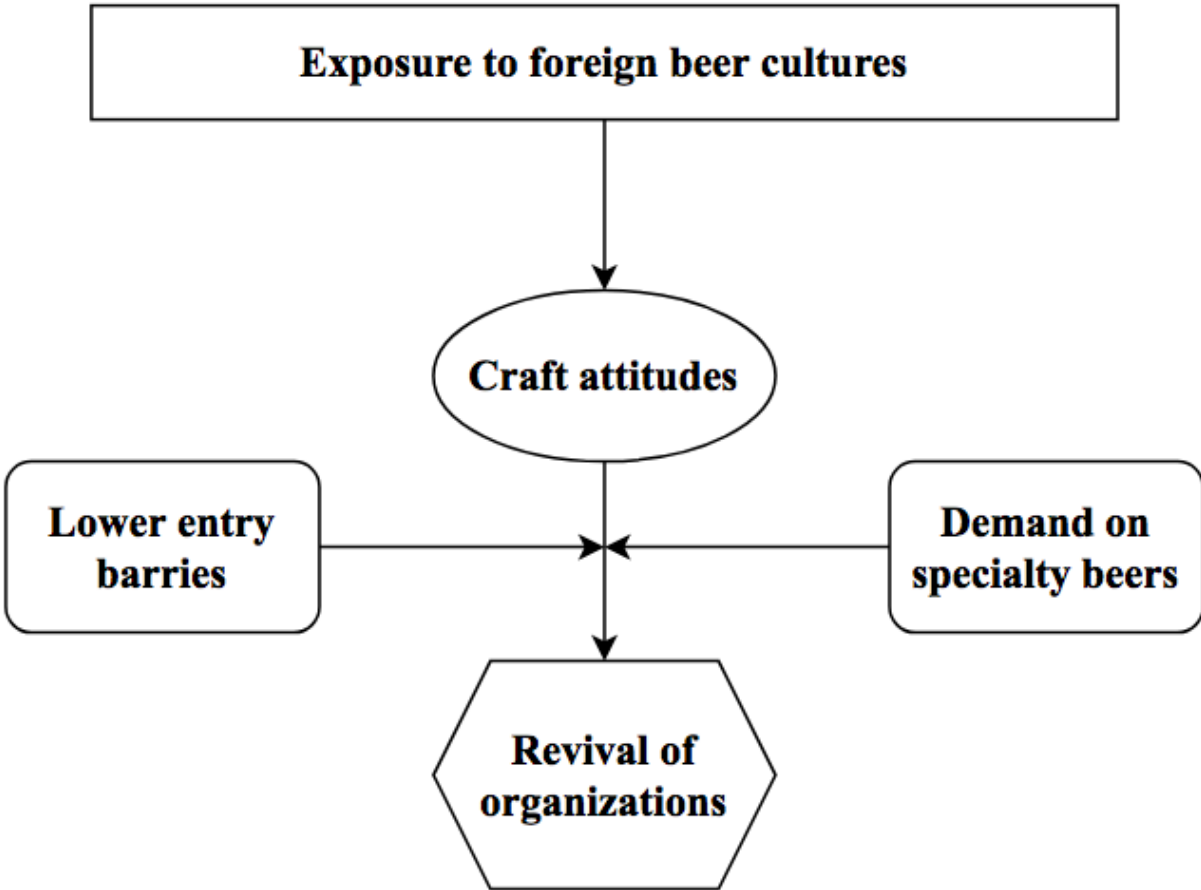
Figure 2 shows the main findings on research question: How did latent organizations manage to rebirth? First of all, the exposure to foreign beer cultures awakened a new generation of craft beer brewers. Beer lovers were exposed to especially the rich Belgium beer culture and found out that they missed these rich flavours in the Netherlands. This way they were motivated to brew their own beers. In brewing they show particular craft attitudes.

The return of those craft attitudes made revival of craft beer breweries possible. These attitudes compensated for the lack of financial resources provided by the breweries and thereby these craft attitudes are the cause of the revival of craft breweries. However, those attitudes alone have not been strong enough to cause the revival of craft breweries. Some craftsmen were exposed to the foreign beer cultures a long time ago and started brewing just a couple of years ago.

Two constitutional effects strengthened the positive effect of craft attitudes on the revival of craft beer breweries. On the one hand low entry barriers made it easier for craftsmen to found an official brewery. These low entry barriers were caused by the rise of self-brewing starter

kits in combination with widely available information on beer brewing on the Internet. On the other hand, a demand for specialty beers provided a market space for the starting breweries.

Figure 3: Final conceptual model



## Chapter 5 Discussion & conclusion

The goal of this research was to enhance practical understanding in organizational ecology regarding the revival of populations of craft organizations by answering the following research question:

“How do latent populations of craft organizations manage to revive?”

For this reason, qualitative research has been conducted at Dutch craft beer breweries. Previous research has shown a resurgence of interest in craft organizations, however not as enhancement of organizational ecology theory.

This study has shown that craft beer breweries managed to revive using typical craft attitudes. These craft attitudes were awakened by exposure to foreign cultures. Low entry barriers and a market demand for specialty beers strengthened the ability of craft attitudes to cause revival of craft beer breweries. In this chapter is discussed how these findings comply with current academic literature and what complications it might have. Finally, limitations will be discussed simultaneously with future research directions.

### 5.1 Exposure to foreign cultures

In questioning how latent beer breweries managed to revive, first of all a look is taken where the interest in beer brewing stems from. Results show that exposure to foreign beer cultures, caused a renewed interest in beer brewing. Craftsmen tasted rich flavours in foreign beers and wanted to bring those beers home. Which is in line with Kroezen and Heugens (2019), they stated that resurgence of crafts stems from remnants of institutional logics, like a beer brewing tradition. These institutional logics are in this research particularly found in Belgium, where a rich beer culture was still present.

These findings confirm Delacroix & Carroll (1983) concluding that new market categories emerge from the remnants of disbanded organizations, when these organizations were not faded away collectively. At first sight the entire craft beer market was faded away, with in the Netherlands only having industrial breweries left over (Van Dijk et al., 2018). However, remnants of craft beer brewing were still present in foreign countries and awakened the interest in craft beer brewing in the Netherlands and thereby showing the craft attitudes in brewing.

## 5.2 Craft attitudes causing revival

The main finding of this research is that craft attitudes caused the revival of organizations. Typical craft attitudes made it possible for these organizations to revive without enough financial resources to pay wages. Craftsmen liked to work in the beer brewery and saw it as a hobby next to their job. This can be explained by Ackers (2019) statement that craftsmen show a lifelong dedication to their craft. Smagina and Ludviga (2021) added that craftsmen are not motivated by commercial opportunities. This study can be seen as another example of showing how the craft attitudes of the craft attitudes over financial gain.

It can thus be suggested that revival of breweries is made possible by these craft attitudes. Most breweries would not financially made it to pay wages to its personnel, which would have stopped the further revival of craft breweries. Giving craftsmen the opportunity to execute their craft by experimenting with beer brewing breweries made revival possible.

Further this research provided another example that entrepreneurship is not just about profit. The fact that craft attitudes have been found to be most important factor to drive an organization could enlarge the overall view in assessing organizations. The main finding that craft attitudes caused the revival of organizations could be linked to the principle of responsible organizations, which is embraced by Radboud University. Attitudes of employees seem to be able to drive organizations other than financial motives.

## 5.3 Strengthening effects

However, craftsmen were exposed to foreign beer cultures many years ago and craft attitudes are as old as the concept of craft itself, the revival of craft beer breweries has only started the last decade. The single effect of craft attitudes on the revival of craft breweries has not been strong enough. Nevertheless, this effect has been strengthened by low barriers and a market demand.

First of all, the low entry barriers, which were made possible by just trying to brew beer at home in combination with information on the internet, and brewing classes. The development of the internet as a source of information has been important for lowering the entry barriers. This way brewers can find solutions to problems they encounter in brewing. These results

corroborate the ideas of Kroezen et al. (2020), who suggested that technological developments are one of the causes for revival of craft organizations.

Another idea of Kroezen et al. (2020) corroborated in this study is the importance of collaboration for the re-emergence of craft organizations. The results of this study showed that brewers shared information via internet as well as in giving and following brewing classes. Which is another example of craftsmen showing a particular craft attitude, collaboration (Dodd et al., 2021).

By sharing information on the internet and giving brewing classes, breweries help other brewers to start a brewery. These results are in agreement with those obtained by Singh and Lumsden (1990) arguing that “The early range of density legitimates the organizational form itself and helps increase the founding rate” (p.164). In this study breweries started to share information on beer brewing with the consequence that more breweries were founded. This way sharing information led to an increase of the founding rate.

#### 5.4 Implications

First of all, this practical study has been trying to explain the revival of populations of craft organizations in organizational ecology theory. The most interesting finding was that craft attitudes caused the revival of organizations. Craft attitudes discussed by Kroezen et al. (2020) were obviously visible in the collected data. Beer brewers showed that they completely comply with the craft attitudes. This research added that these attitudes have been important in causing the revival of the craft beer breweries.

However, the revival of the breweries could not have happened without the renewed interest in beer brewing itself. Our findings have been in line with Kroezen and Heugens (2019) showing that exposure to foreign beer cultures awakened a new interest in beer brewing in the Netherlands. Thereby the Delacroix & Carroll (1983) statement that new organizations revive on basis of remnants of disbanded organizations was confirmed. The beer culture in the Netherlands have been gone for a while however it still existed abroad. By new exposure to beer brewing in other countries, craftsman were encouraged to restart old breweries.

Next the positive effect of craft attitudes on the revival of craft beer breweries was strengthened by low entry barriers. These low entry barriers were created by widely available

information on the internet, which was made possible by the willingness to share this information. The willingness to share information is also one of the craft attitudes (Kroezen et al., 2020). Espstein (2008) mentioned that craft organizations typically organize in guilds, however our study founded that information on beer brewing is typically found online.

Another straightforward effect that strengthened the revival of craft beer breweries was a high market demand for specialty beers. This study found that beer brewers were motivated to start an official brewery, because lots of people were interested in their beers. Which gave beer brewers the opportunity to scale up their hobby and start a brewery.

This research has been a beginning in enhancing understanding of organizational ecology regarding the revival of populations of craft organizations in a practical way. By doing this research an example of how to examine revival of organizations as addition to organizational theory has been provided. Yet this study also provides practical guidelines on how former disbanded organizations has been revived. Entrepreneurs who want to restart an organization could use this study by examining drivers behind formerly revived organisations.

### 5.5 Future research directions

This research offers a first step toward better understanding of the revival of populations of organizations within an organizational ecology perspective. Revival of organization has been a less researched are in organizational ecology. Which is why this research consists of an experimental approach. Therefore, at least two promising research avenues have been signalised on the subject of organizational ecology theory.

First of all, this study has been focussed on breweries founded in the last decade. This period represented a very high rising number of craft breweries. Yet is does not represent the first revived breweries which started to focus on craft beer. Therefore, a knowledge gap about the first revived craft breweries in the Netherlands still exists. Focussing on how these breweries have been able to revive could enrich our understanding of revival within organizational ecology theory.

Another limitation of this research comes with the generalizability. Qualitative research has been conducted, meaning this study gained deeper understanding in few organizations. This has been a successful method in founding new theory, however issues regarding

generalizability exist. Further research could focus on quantitative testing the results on more craft organizations. Even more interestingly could be to examine if these craft attitudes also play a part in non-craft organizations.

## 5.6 Conclusion

Craft organizations which were latent showed an impressive resurgence of interest. This practical study has been trying to enhance practical understanding on revival of populations of craft organizations within organizational ecology. Craft attitudes caused the revival of craft organizations by compensating the lack of generating financial resources. This effect was strengthened by low entry barriers and a market demand. As craft attitudes showed in this study, motives other than financial gain have been essential in the revival of craft organizations.

## 5.7 personal reflection

After writing five months on my thesis, time has come to reflect on this process. In this process I have learnt that it was difficult to start on this project. Finding an interesting topic of research took in my opinion too long, setting me back in the process right from the start. However, when I finally knew which way to go writing went very fast. Especially in the week before I had to hand in the proposal large steps in the process of writing the thesis were taken. Using the feedback given on my proposal I learnt that I should better argue why some elements in my thesis are important for this research. Therefore, I tried to argue in every chapter how this helps to answer the research question.

Using a qualitative research method, I had to conduct ten interviews. Due to my lack of experience in conducting interviews, the first interviews have had its struggles. However, as I conducted more interviews, I became better acquainted with it and was able to ask more interesting follow-up questions. I learnt that even asking for things you already know can bring interesting insights.

Other lessons learnt are that in possible future projects, I will try to use feedback moments better than I have done this time. In writing this thesis I have multiple time been unable to get feedback on the parts that I wanted to. In future projects I would urge myself to try to get on

track from the beginning of the project. However, I also learnt that I get motivated right before deadlines, which eases writing.

Altogether, writing my master thesis have been a very educational process in which I combined my academic skills learnt on university in combination with conducting my own research, which is something I was more unfamiliar with. Walking through this process in which you do not know that what you do is 100% correct, has been very educational and learns to trust on your own capabilities. This has certainly prepared me for my future career in management.

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## Appendix 1: Interviewscript

Kunt u zich kort voorstellen?

Waar komt u interesse voor bieren vandan?

Waarom bent u begonnen met bierbrouwen?

Hoe heeft dat zich ontwikkeld tot een brouwerij?

Heeft u voor het oprichten van de brouwerij moeten samenwerken?

Wat is de rol van trends (producten / technieken) geweest bij oprichting?

In welke mate is traditie terug te zien bij oprichting?

Waar heeft de brouwerij zijn bestaansrecht aan te danken?

Heeft u verder nog iets toe te voegen over de oprichting van de brouwerij?