
Editorial

Zelimir William Todorovic

Department of Management and Marketing,
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne,
NF 340L, 2101 Eas Coliseum Blvd, Fort Wayne, IN, USA
E-mail: todorovz@ipfw.edu

Entrepreneurship is a relatively new field of research. Only recently did our society come to realise the importance of entrepreneurship as a vital part of economic development, impacting many nations of the world. Although entrepreneurship is a unique field of research, its growth has been phenomenal. As this field of knowledge becomes a popular topic for many researchers, it is vital we stop and reflect back on where we were, where we are, and where we are heading.

Although, most special issues focus on one topic or one area of research, this special issue presents a sampling of different areas of knowledge development in the field of entrepreneurship. Realising that there has been a significant growth of knowledge in entrepreneurship, it is neither possible nor desirable to try to cover all the potential research topics in one issue. Consequently, this issue embraces a panorama of the entrepreneurial landscape by highlighting selected frontiers of entrepreneurship research. Studies presented in this issue are not meant to be a comprehensive overview of research, but rather an exemplar vista of different research endeavours presently being undertaken. To this end, first three papers in this issue focus on three unique areas of knowledge expansion, while last two papers provide conceptual arguments highlighting new frontiers.

Mason, Dana and Anderson (2012) examined Aboriginal entrepreneurship from the perspective of oil and gas development in Canada's Northwest Territories. Specifically, the authors observe the manner in which oil and gas development in Canada's Northwest Territories impacts Aboriginal entrepreneurship goals, vision and objectives. Mason, Dana and Anderson prolifically demonstrate that Aboriginal entrepreneurship is quite different from 'regular' (that is more commonly observed) entrepreneurial activity, as would be realised in most southern cities – in Canada or USA. Detecting that Canada's Northwest Territories have experienced boom and bust cycles, aboriginal entrepreneurs often focus their entrepreneurial resources and energy towards explicating problems ascertained locally in these regions. Essentially, Aboriginal entrepreneurs focus on overcoming disadvantages they discern to be around them, by becoming self-reliant, and developing good livelihood for their communities.

This paper is focused on the specific sample group – Aboriginal entrepreneurs – with an extensive international scope probing populations in Alaska, Canada, Norway and Russia. The authors find that since many Aboriginal entrepreneurs are close to the land, they hold holistic worldviews. Consequently, in significantly higher proportions, these entrepreneurs start new ventures, with the primary ambition to develop economic and social resources, as well as strengthen Aboriginal control over such resources in their regions. They demonstrate that in certain cultural contexts entrepreneurship may have

completely different characteristics than that suggested by main stream research. Therefore, Mason, Dana and Anderson illustrate that researchers and practitioners alike must be careful to incorporate unique cultural and economic factors in their examination of entrepreneurial activity.

Dye and Vibert (2012) explore the organisational capacity in Nova Scotia wine industry. Their paper considers a more traditional entrepreneurial activity, which results from locally abundant, traditionally significant resources found in Nova Scotia. They look at the immense growth and organisational capacity, with the goal of exporting Nova Scotia wine to other regions of Canada and the world. Dye and Vibert identified staffing, infrastructure, technology, financial resources and strategic leadership as the main impediments to growth in this industry. Respondents also discussed program process management and networking linkages with other organisations, which they established to be essential.

Further, Dye and Vibert (2012) identified key personnel, cross training, system capital and equipment sourcing as the main constraints to growth of locally developed resource driven entrepreneurial activities. This paper shows that the local resource base and entrepreneurial history are significant considerations towards the diagnosis and improvement of this specific industry.

Burton and Swanson (2012) address another area of entrepreneurship knowledge and research – entrepreneurship education. Although some may argue that entrepreneurship cannot be taught, consensus of most researchers is that entrepreneurship, similar to leadership, can be taught effectively within existing educational infrastructure. Propelling this knowledge forward Burton and Swanson considered the difficulties and challenges of entrepreneurship instruction. Specifically, they examined the role that entrepreneurial aptitudes of university students have on the efficacy of entrepreneurship education. To this point, this study more closely examines the effect entrepreneurial aptitudes, entrepreneurial intentions, and past entrepreneurial experience have towards experiencing successful entrepreneurship education outcomes. One notable finding of the study identifies a need to accommodate students relative to their aptitudes and intention. Particularly, the authors suggest that specific courses be designed to accommodate students who intend to start new businesses, while other courses should be offered to students who do not want to start their own businesses.

Ma and Todorovic (2012) and Sarkis (2012) provide conceptual development and accompanying arguments which extend entrepreneurship knowledge to the next level. Ma and Todorovic consider entrepreneurial quality from the point of view of national culture and economic development. Sarkis, on the other hand, compares the relationship between intensive activities of mergers and acquisitions in the high technology industry and the role innovation plays in these activities.

Ma and Todorovic (2012) consider the global and social political environment, from the perspective of entrepreneurship quality as a region specific variable. They demonstrate that the number of new startups does not represent an effective way of measuring entrepreneurship and its effect on economic development. Instead, authors argue that entrepreneurship activities differ in respect to quality. Quality of entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is posited to impact local economic development. In fact, authors provide strong evidence that it is the quality of entrepreneurship and not the quantity, which contributes to economic development of different regions in the world. Ma and Todorovic find that national culture of a country (or region) has an effect on entrepreneurial quality through three distinct variables; entrepreneurial orientation, the

resource base, and regulatory stability. In turn they posit that entrepreneurial orientation, resource base and regulatory stability synergistically impact entrepreneurial quality of a new venture or startup. Finally, Ma and Todorovic show that using just simply number of entrepreneurial startups, a common practice in some regions and some studies, is neither a sufficient nor accurate measure of entrepreneurial activity.

Sarkis (2012) explores the relationship between mergers and acquisitions in the high-technology industry and entrepreneurial activities undertaken by technology entrepreneurs and managers. Sarkis identifies acquisitions and mergers as indicators of intentional growth strategy in high-technology firms. He proceeds to explore the relationship between acquisitions and entrepreneurship in the high technology industry, and understands the role of innovation and venture capital within the context of entrepreneurship. Finally, the author constructs a theoretical model that elaborates on the relationship between entrepreneurship and acquisition in the context of innovation and venture capital.

As mentioned earlier, papers presented in this issue elaborate on the complexity of new knowledge development in entrepreneurship. The field of entrepreneurship is a very rich field, and is moving at a very quick pace. The danger we all face is to focus so intensely on furthering the frontiers of entrepreneurship at the expense of original forethought. We must not forget to stop and think outside the box – which in itself is a notion central to entrepreneurship – and ensure no gaps are formed in our pursuit of a more complete understanding of entrepreneurship. It is the hope of this guest editor that we all stop and contemplate, taking time to understand the specifics of the variables we intend to study, before we launch into yet another research project. Papers presented in this issue provide individual and unique views, from varying perspectives, which all promote the development and enrichment of our knowledge of the wonderful field of entrepreneurship.

The guest editor would like to thank all of the authors who contributed to this issue as well as all the reviewers who assisted in its preparation. Likewise, the editor would like to acknowledge all authors who submitted papers to this issue, including many valuable papers which were not included this time.