

International Entrepreneurship

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International Entrepreneurship

Theoretical Foundations and Practices

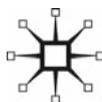
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To our parents, without whose support we would not have achieved this goal like any other in our lives

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Foreword

In this book, Antonella Zucchella and Giovanna Magnani have set out with several objectives. They have, within a single volume, sought to capture and interpret the diversity that has evolved in the literature on international entrepreneurship. With a sound understanding of how this diverse literature has developed and where it is advancing towards, they offer their interpretation which culminates in identifying international entrepreneurial organizations (IEOs) as their new take on this evolution. They see international entrepreneurship as an organizational process which they interpret as an organization initiating a new venture (or entering into a market) and proceeding to an ongoing entrepreneurial process in international markets. The key dimensions of time, space, and behaviour are used to bring a process orientation to their study.

Three of the chapters present the literature on international entrepreneurship as framed within the context of (1) international business studies, (2) entrepreneurship studies, and (3) strategic management studies. Zucchella and Magnani see these domains as the dominant and cognate fields that conjointly come together to inform the relatively new international entrepreneurship field. Each domain contains particular traditions such as the economic, behavioural, evolutionary, and institutional aspects of international business studies; classical, neo-classical economic, and other interpretations of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurial orientations in the entrepreneurship literature; and the resource-based, competency, capability, and network approaches in the strategic management studies.

Throughout the book the authors have drawn upon a large and diverse literature to bring their own interpretation and construction to bear. While the international entrepreneurship field emerged at the intersection of international business and entrepreneurship, as advanced by Ben Oviatt and Patricia McDougall, Zucchella and Magnani have broadened their scope to include strategic management, which is essential to their re-framing of the international entrepreneurial organization. This allows them to add the formulation of strategy to the traditional approaches of exploration, exploitation, learning, and individual and organizational frames. They are interested not only in the early acts of constituting the new venture or making that first foray into a foreign market but,

importantly, in the ongoing entrepreneurial activities that firms engage in throughout their life cycles.

They talk about the “heteromorphic” nature of international entrepreneurship, about behaviours being framed in “evolving relationships with time and differentiated spaces”, geographical and institutional, and about “relationships with different actors of value systems”. Critically important, and recognized early in their construction of the international entrepreneurial organization, is the centrality of uncertainty, and they make much out of differentiating risk from uncertainty. While so much has been written previously about uncertainty and its place within entrepreneurship, empirical studies readily gravitate to risk because it is calculable.

Zucchella and Magnani have sifted and extensively quoted the literature in order to provide the detail necessary to interpret the international entrepreneurial scene. In addition, they present their views on the directions it may take in the future, moving beyond the focus on small entrepreneurial firms, venturing into foreign markets, and including other types of enterprises such as multinational enterprises (MNEs) and their subsidiaries, international new ventures (INVs), not-for-profits and, as they say, “entrepreneurial firms in general”. This is most welcome as entrepreneurial activity is clearly fundamental to firms of all genres, both to their strategizing and to their longevity.

In sum, this book offers a fresh look at a domain that calls for robust theorizing, and, in the words of Daft and Lewin (1990: 1), progression beyond “footnote-on-footnote research as the norm for the field”.

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Reference

- Daft, R. L. and Lewin, A.Y. (1990). “Can organisation studies begin to break out of the normal science straitjacket?” *Organisation Science*, 1(1): 1–9.

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