

Book Review

A Research Agenda for Entrepreneurship and Context by Friederike Welter and William B. Gartner. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2016, 172 pp.

This book provides the issues and research agenda relating to the contextualisation of entrepreneurship research. Generally, the book presents directions for researchers to explore entrepreneurship research by theorising contexts thus extending entrepreneurship research. This book aims to shed light on context matters in entrepreneurial action as all entrepreneurial phenomena occur within contexts. One of the main issues covered in this book is the need to treat context more seriously in the research process rather than merely signify it as a control variable or background of the research. This book is composed of fourteen chapters (thirteen chapters, with one chapter on reference list) covering various contexts which can be incorporated throughout the research process in entrepreneurship.

The first chapter introduces the issues, earlier attempts, and personal viewpoints of authors relating context in entrepreneurial studies. The authors highlight that context plays a role in recognising differences in entrepreneurship, and its variation is significant to determine entrepreneurial behaviour. The authors conclude that the research on entrepreneurship should see the differences rather than the similarities to generalise entrepreneurial behaviours.

The second chapter begins with a discussion of various contexts, including spatial, temporal, institutional, social, and societal contexts. This chapter opposes the idea of a single model of entrepreneurship as entrepreneurial environments, including social norms, vary across locations and influence differently to entrepreneurs' cognitive process, which later shapes specific entrepreneurial behaviours. The remainder of the chapter discusses the reasons why context-cognitions are often ignored in entrepreneurship research.

The third chapter focuses on the effort to reframe the idea of contextualisation by emphasising linguistic and practice-based approaches. In particular, this chapter provides insights into the way contextualisation entails text-with-context that can be grasped through narrative and discursive studies. It illustrates contextualisation as a part of the entrepreneurial process research and as a primary source of data generation.

The fourth chapter illustrates the need to broaden and contextualise the concept of entrepreneurial opportunity. The idealist role of entrepreneurship, to some extent, is affected by opportunity inequality which explains that socioeconomic immobility is determined by the context. This chapter

suggests the tactics to contextualise opportunity inequality, highlight the position of opportunity and its various meanings in understanding entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in order to overcome structural disadvantage.

The fifth chapter of this book discusses the temporal dimension of context. It starts with the role of time in theoretical construct and frequently surfaces as a dependent or control variable. Then, the chapter suggests that time needs to be treated in a different way whereby conceptions of time involves nonlinear conceptions, multiple temporalities, and the uncertainty which hold important implications for research on entrepreneurship.

The sixth chapter suggests that historical contextualisation could bring novel insights into entrepreneurial processes and theory building by treating them as an interpretive or analytical activity. It highlights the historical logics in which researchers could explain the causal link between and across different periods.

Later, the seventh chapter of this book explains the challenges of theorising context in entrepreneurship research. The discussion in this chapter is on the important role of the entrepreneur as an agent within a context (context-agency relations). Further, it argues that this conceptualisation is imperative for identifying, selecting and integrating multiple contexts in the selected empirical event.

Accordingly, the eighth chapter explores the fundamentals of theorising entrepreneurship in context. It includes the understanding of interrelated and specific contexts and which conditions are substantial for the entrepreneurship process. Then, it provides a meta-theoretical building blocks framework to analyse entrepreneurs' cognition and behaviour.

The ninth chapter describes the misconceptions in entrepreneurship methodological approaches, in which entrepreneurship phenomenon are homogeneous; thus, most researchers tend to control the contextual influences. To address this issue, the remainder of this chapter discusses a more practical approach for context-sensitive research at each step of the research process.

An exploration of entrepreneurs' embeddedness in an environment (drawn from Bourdieu's theory of practice) is offered in the tenth chapter. The remaining topics discussed in this chapter are economic individualism, networked social contexts and temporal embeddedness.

The sixth chapter (historical contextualisation) is extended in the eleventh chapter of this book, as this chapter focuses on historical methods for contextualising entrepreneurship research. Then, this chapter provides insights to address the opportunities and challenges that occur due to the retrospective nature of historical contextualisation.

The twelfth chapter presents the author's (Gartner's) reflection and purpose of writing on contextualisation. It demonstrates how the research is

shaped by recognising researchers, readers, and the structures to report the research. The author concludes that the work on contexts in this book grasped as discourses among the community of scholars. Subsequently, the thirtieth chapter provides a roadmap for future research in entrepreneurship studies relating back previous chapters that have been discussed.

A prominent contribution of this book lies in the wide-ranging approaches presented by the authors on the issues related to context in entrepreneurship studies. This can assist scholars to transform their way in treating contexts in entrepreneurship research. This can be seen through the considerable possible efforts imparted by authors in a specific chapter. However, the understanding of contextualisation seems to be overlapped with a qualitative approach, as the authors illustrate that contextualisation could be achieved through narrative and discursive studies as well as through interpretive activities. Thus, a more explicit methodological explanation in describing context could enhance this book. Last but not least, this book is recommended for scholars to gain more understanding of entrepreneurship studies and could be used as a starting point in advancing their research avenue.

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