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International Entrepreneurship as a Scholarly Field

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ABSTRACT

This monograph presents a comprehensive framework for international entrepreneurship (IE). To make our contribution cohesive, first, we focus our attention on definitions; then, by providing an in-depth analysis of the impacts of both internal and external factors on the decision-making processes of entrepreneurs in the realm of IE, we elaborate on the implications within this domain. Moving beyond existing literature, we use a multi-level analysis. Within this framework, we scrutinize three fundamental units of analysis: the individual entrepreneur, the firm, and the country. It is posited that this approach will facilitate a comprehensive comprehension of the considerations pertinent to international entrepreneurship, along with the principal factors at each level of analysis. By encompassing all three levels, our objective is to illuminate the interconnectedness between individual traits, firm competencies, and national circumstances that shape international entrepreneurial activities.

Moreover, we adopt a behavioral perspective to scrutinize how international entrepreneurs perceive, evaluate, and capitalize on opportunities across borders. This lens enables us to

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acquaint our erudite audience with the decision-making procedures of these individuals. Consequently, this approach is expected to yield a more profound and nuanced insight into the motivations, risk assessments, and cognitive predispositions that shape the international entrepreneurial behavior of entrepreneurs. We believe this monograph will serve as a comprehensive and integrated resource for scholars and practitioners interested in international entrepreneurship.

1

Introduction

Entrepreneurship, characterized by dynamism and innovation, has transcended national borders through fostering innovation and economic growth across the globe. Furthermore, technological advancements have facilitated the internationalization of firms, regardless of size (Dana *et al.*, 1999b; Wright and Dana, 2003). Yet, from an academic perspective, entrepreneurship is a relatively new field (Landström, 2020) and international entrepreneurship is even newer. Dana (2017) explained the evolution of international entrepreneurship (IE); pioneer contributions in the field included McDougall (1989), and Dana and Wright (1997). Dana *et al.* (1999a) explained the theoretical foundations of the emerging field of IE. This was followed by McDougall and Oviatt (2000), Acs *et al.* (2003), Young *et al.* (2003) and Dana (2004). Dana and Wright (2009) identified priorities and their Delphi study was replicated by Etemad *et al.* (2022). This monograph sets the stage for a deeper understanding of the multifaceted phenomenon of IE.

Our contribution offers a comprehensive outlook of IE theoretical principles, empirical trends, and practical implications. By reviewing the prior studies on IE, we establish a historical context for the field. In this regard, we shift our focus from traditional, stage-based models of

internationalization to a more comprehensive and adaptable one which includes “Born Globals” and “INVs”. Following this, in Section 2, we explore the individual driving forces behind international ventures. We examine the unique characteristics, motivations, and competencies that distinguish international entrepreneurs from their domestic counterparts. We identify various factors such as cultural influences, risk tolerance, and global networks are among the key determinants of success in the international environment. Then, by recognizing the critical role of institutions in shaping the landscape for international ventures, in Section 3, we address the importance of formal institutions, such as legal systems and intellectual property rights. Consecutively, to make the subject more lucid, we demonstrate how these institutions can either facilitate or hinder international entrepreneurial activity.

In the next stage, in Section 4, we address the crucial role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in nurturing and propelling international ventures. In this section, we highlight the various actors that contribute to the ecosystem and analyze how their support structures influence the internationalization process. To deepen our understanding, we center our attention on the practical considerations faced by entrepreneurial businesses venturing into foreign markets. In this section, we examine various entry mode strategies and analyze the factors influencing the choice of an appropriate strategy. Furthermore, in this section, we explore the challenges of managing international operations, including cultural adaptation and logistical complexities. Section 5 investigates a set of structural factors, such as inequality and institutions, related to IE. Then, in Section 6, we elaborate on the symbiotic relationship between innovation and international entrepreneurship. To do so, we acknowledge how internationalization can stimulate innovation by exposing ventures to new knowledge, markets, and resources. Conversely, in this section, we shed light on ways that innovation can be a key driver of internationalization, allowing ventures to develop unique products and services that hold global appeal.

Recognizing the role of government policies in fostering an environment conducive to international entrepreneurial activity is a subject that we address in Section 7. We also elucidate on various policy instruments that can encourage internationalization. Moreover, we highlight

the challenges of balancing national interests with the demands of a globalized economy.

Our work concludes by addressing the emerging trends and challenges shaping the future of the field. In Section 8, we delve into the impact of technological advancements, such as e-commerce and digital platforms, on international market access and competition. Furthermore, in this section, we meticulously explain the growing importance of sustainability and social responsibility in the context of international entrepreneurship.

Thus, we intend to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical considerations. By drawing on insights from diverse research disciplines, including management, economics, and sociology, we attempt to offer a holistic understanding of this dynamic and ever-evolving field. The contribution is intended for a broad audience, encompassing scholars, students, policymakers, and practitioners alike.

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