

The Knowledge Network of International Entrepreneurship: Theory and Evidence

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ABSTRACT. The knowledge network associated with the young and emerging field of International Entrepreneurship is defined through a Boolean search progression of key words on the SSCI data bases from 1992 to 2000. The knowledge network of an applied field portrays, and usually follows, the actual developmental path of its corresponding field. Some 287 articles document the early emergence of International Entrepreneurship as a field of scholarly inquiry. When a field is young and in need of theoretical foundations, the knowledge networks of other fields may provide for those early needs. This is the case of International Entrepreneurship. The rich theoretical foundations of the two fields of International Business and Entrepreneurship, among others, have nourished and accelerated the internationalization process of entrepreneurship. A detailed analysis of 7,651 citations contained in the contributions of the 287 documents reported here traces International Entrepreneurship's rich, yet young, developmental path. This analysis reveals a wealth of information, for example the lists of highly-cited books, articles, authors and their affiliated institutions presented here.

1. Introduction

The young and highly dynamic field of International Entrepreneurship (Giamartino et al., 1993; McDougall et al., 1994; McDougall, 1996) is facing rapid change and tremendous challenges.

The internationalization of entrepreneurship is driven by a host of dynamic factors, including rapid technological change (Etemad, 1999), globalization of competition (Ohmae, 1985, 1990; Emergi, 1992; Kobrin, 1995; Levitt, 1983) and environment (Dana et al., 1999a, b; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994), and entrepreneurial dynamism stimulated by expanding market opportunities (Kirzner, 1973; McDougall et al., 1994). This process is further fueled by the emergence of time as a competitive weapon (Stalk, 1988; Stalk and Hout, 1990), hastening technological obsolescence (Bower and Hout, 1988) and product life cycle. As this developmental process cannot draw on the well-established rules and capabilities of the past, it must improvise its own strategy over time, on an ad-hoc basis, which may give it the appearance of turbulence, if not chaos, at its early stages. This process is further complicated because entrepreneurs, who are generally self-reliant, pro-active, and discontented with the status-quo (Schumpeter, 1947), are forced simultaneously to react to the rapid change and the increasing complexities of their environment – due mainly to the *globalization of competition*, which requires resources and expertise far beyond their own – and to seek support networks to deal with those complexities (Hamel et al., 1989; Yip, 1992) at the same time. The latter is bound to infringe on their traditional independence, if not making them fully interdependent (Acs and Yeung, 1999; Etemad, 1999).

Although this process may help to further internationalize a typical small firm's supply and value chains and also enhance its competitiveness, it may not necessarily follow the orderly set of rules by which entrepreneurs had conducted themselves in the past. Entrepreneurs may find

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