

How to Get Published in the Best Entrepreneurship Journals – A Guide to Steer Your Academic Career

Edited by Alain Fayolle and Mike Wright

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One might say that by opening this book you are opening a bible, or have a ticket to a guaranteed publication in your hands. Like any cooking recipe books, this text is full of tips and clear explanations on how an academic with a desire to get their work published in top entrepreneurship journals can actually achieve this goal. This book is timely, as entrepreneurship academics can observe the marked raising of the threshold needed to publish in leading journals and the demands placed on scholars to be able to successfully meet this challenge. To equip the PhD students and early career researchers in the art and science of publishing, Alain Fayolle and Mike Wright have brought together an accolade of authors, who frequently publish their work and are the contemporary leaders of their respective sub-field of entrepreneurship.

Each chapter is devoted to various parts of the publishing process, whether it is about understanding the review process, or managing the research process, or thoughts on ethics in entrepreneurship research, or justifying the use of qualitative methods, or even positioning the entrepreneurship research for general management journals. There are also specific chapters devoted to understanding and embedding the context in the entrepreneurship research, for instance by exploring the contexts of entrepreneurship, for instance centered on policy and Asia-focused research. The contributors of 14 chapters pose important questions on how can we get our work published and cited, do European researchers have problems in publishing in Anglo-Saxon journals, and for early career researchers how can they publish from their PhD thesis, and engage in the main conversation rather than being on the periphery.

The overarching theme of this publication is summed up by Danny Miller “there is no one best way to do research and that a wide variety of points of view may be brought to bear” (p. xii). In the remainder of the review, I will sum up some of the key messages from individual chapters. By highlighting these points, my aim is to enthuse the researchers to get a copy of this text, and for the senior scholars to recommend this text to their PhD students and early career researchers who they have responsibility of mentoring especially in the field of entrepreneurship.

In the first chapter of the book, Alain Fayolle provides thoughts on developing and writing for entrepreneurship journals. He provides a detailed overview of the main journals, their current submission statistics and acceptance rates. This particular section might be useful for early career researchers who are only starting in the field of entrepreneurship, and are deciding on the first outlet to target with their articles. The information compiled by Alaine Fayolle about individual journals puts in context the difficulty of getting an acceptance from the top publications, and he highlights the expectations that these journals have regarding the quality of the submissions. There is also an additional note from the Editor of *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* journal, Alistair Anderson, who explains the review process relative to his specific journal; moreover, he provides a very detailed account of the review stages.

This chapter leads the reader to Chapter 2 in which a more in-depth analysis of what is means to publish in top journals in the field is presented as a reflection from Mike Wright,



who provides a very useful account of what happens in terms of writing a paper that fits with the journal. He starts with a very clear explanation of writing introductions, framing and positioning a paper within the conversation in the selected journal. I think his insight on how to develop the literature review and theoretical framework, particularly in relation to a more quantitative approach through development of hypotheses, data and methodology, methods of analysis, presentation of results and discussion is outstanding. The main conclusions that Mike makes at the end of this chapter are to do with clear fit between the paper and the journal, importance of going beyond what we already know, dealing with rejection, working in teams who together are able to work to “industry standard”, and having the energy and enjoying of the topic, which transcends to the reader, when the paper is eventually published.

Chapter 3 also contributed by Mike Wright provides a detailed account of the reviewing process by explaining the decisions the editors make at different stages from initial decision or desk rejection, to expectation and examples of rejection letters and a more desired outcome of a “revise and resubmit,” and what it looks like, how to deal with this such letters. I am also specifically impressed with Mike’s review of the common problems related to the submissions, as he clearly identifies the things researchers should avoid. More importantly, Mike identifies the most common reasons for rejection of submissions, which could be avoided, where authors have not clearly defined the contribution their research is making, made mistakes in method or made deficiencies in analysis.

The next three chapters explore the process of publication using key examples and reflections from the contributors. Per Davidsson, a prolific author in the field of entrepreneurship presents a key rationale for why his papers ended up in top journals as he reflects on publishing ten of his articles: he talks about the importance of fit with the journal and a contribution, hard work, high quality and uniqueness of data and being part of a good team of co-authors. In Chapter 5, the authors present insights on managing the research process. Here, Robert Blackburn and Friederike Welter have explained how to map out the journey from an idea to publication, and as they explain this, they sum up that the research journey is complex and subject to a variety of challenges, but is rewarded in the end. In Chapter 6, one can learn about the different types of the literature review from narrative to meta-analysis, and find explanations of what makes a good literature review. Hermann Frank and Isabella Hatak provide insight into why and how a high-quality literature review can enable the reader to gain awareness and understanding of the existing work in the research field.

In Chapter 7, Benson Honig presents the topic of ethics in publishing in entrepreneurship research, and explains why this is becoming an increasingly important topic to be discussed, as not only as entrepreneurship scholars we have responsibility for developing the next generation entrepreneurs and scholars through our research, but also we have to be aware of the dangers of non-ethical behavior and consequences at different levels. Another chapter aimed at the early career researchers is Chapter 8, which is devoted to how one can publish from their PhD thesis and Sally Jones and Helle Neergaard pose a question of how one can move from the periphery to the inner circle, and by doing so challenge the scholars to start finding their voice and develop confidence in academic conversation. The main takeaways in this chapter are discussions around the opportunities to publish via a monograph, and reflections of how new researchers need to think about their academic identity and how one can deal with emotions that are involved in producing papers from the PhD thesis.

One of my personal favorites is Chapter 9, in which Dimo Dimov explores a challenging question whether European scholars have problems getting published in Anglo-Saxon journals. He argues that whilst some scholars face such difficulties, not all the scholars do, and he attributes this to the early development of academics via socialization for publishing

and training which takes place at the doctoral level. Building on this chapter, another puzzle in entrepreneurship research is being resolved in Chapter 10, which relates to how scholars can publish qualitative entrepreneurship research in top journals. In this chapter, Nicole Coviello presents her thoughts on how one can learn to produce qualitative studies that are important and impactful. Indeed, we as entrepreneurship researchers need to think about our contribution, but for me the ultimate message in her chapter is around the notion of writing as craft, and how scholars should learn to be accurate and clear in writing which underpins the clarity of thought. Moreover, this clarity is then translated into a paper that comes across as compelling and believable, and something that is articulated well.

The next few chapters are devoted to publishing about entrepreneurship that takes place within specific contexts. For instance in Chapter 11, David Alstrom and Gary Bruton interrogate what questions should researchers be posing when researching in Asian context. Should researchers just repeat the questions asked in the West? Due to the exceptional difference in institutional environment, the authors say their needs to be better conceptualization of such context, and hence qualitative work will be helpful. In Chapter 12, the authors explain how the scholars can benefit from publishing their research in a different format, specifically through case studies, that can support teaching, but beyond that Franz Lohke, Melissa Baucus and Charles Carson, provide an overview of what makes a good theory-development case, and justifications for why case method may offer some advantages, including that it provides useful opportunities to generate new theories, modify what we know and compare and contrast two or more theories. Their paper is based on a systematic analysis of 42 theory development and 19 teaching cases that have been published in top journals in the last five years. Chapter 13 brings the readers to wider issues of how entrepreneurship research should embed the policy at the core of the research investigations. David Audretsch, a prolific writer in this area, calls for research that understands how entrepreneurship policy shapes the emergence of entrepreneurship leading to economic growth and job creation, improving performance and competitiveness.

The final chapter of the book takes a step up and questions whether the entrepreneurship research is relevant to the general management scholars. What are the possibilities of publishing in the top management journals, how can the researchers in the field make their work relevant beyond the entrepreneurship as a subject? What needs to change in the way in which we write? Is there a different formula for success to be learnt here?

Having read the book edited by Mike Wright and Alaine Fayolle, I keep wondering, how would I have benefited from such a publication, would it have been available when I started on my PhD journey? My answer is I would have immensely, benefited from this book. Regardless of how experienced the supervisors are, and how rigorous the PhD training in institutions is, there is never a cluster of knowledge available to PhD researchers, like presented in this book at one place. A lot of the questions I have had, when developing as a researcher, are answered in this book, simply with whether to start, what to look out for, whom to speak to? In my view, this book is a “must have” on a shelf of every supervisor, and a recommendation for every university library to have, where the subject of entrepreneurship is taught and researched. I am keeping my copy of my shelf, and will get back to it and revisit now and then, whenever I decide to target a particular journal within or outside of entrepreneurship area of study, whether I would want to give advice to my PhD students about the avenues for publication, or whether I would be reviewing papers for academic journals, or writing to submit to them myself.

As I got to the end of the book, I felt that the contributions were great within it, but I am left wanting to know more. What we rarely talk about is the politics behind publishing, and how being at the right place at the right time sometimes is all that is required to get yourself involved in a new project. Maybe there is a scope for a second edition, in which the authors could explore the issues of engagement with institutions like AOM, BAM, ISBE, ELASM, USABE, and how being part of these academic networks may help in shaping new researchers work. Moreover,

the next edition might include contributions on new emergent fields that cut across a number of areas that connect to entrepreneurship subjects, for instance migration, sociology, psychology, economic geography, marketing to name a few. There is a need for more targeted contributions on specific new methodologies, for instance engaged scholarship and action research that are the ones that are creating real impact on the subjects that we study. Maybe by writing about this, the new researchers will feel that their work is going to be relevant beyond the academia, and hence will create motivation for real engagement in the field.

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Deconstructing Conflict: Understanding Family Business, Shared Wealth and Power

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This book is written by consultants to family business who have addressed in a novel manner one of the major challenges within the realm of family business practice. Starting from a standpoint that conflict is inherent and in fact built into the structures of family business, the text takes the reader through the ways in which conflicts develops, can be analysed and therefore addressed.

The early chapters focus on family business, family firms and family enterprise setting the framework for much of what follows. Whilst avoiding the trap that assumes that family succession is the only successful route forward and highlighting well the alternatives, the focus on managing conflict for a successful outcome is set. The middle section of the book considers the “Conflict Equation”, which captures the factors inherent within the conflict of a family business within an “algebraic equation” model. The notion of an “algebraic equation” with a purely qualitative focus was new to me, but as a way of capturing the factors inherent in family business that contribute to conflict the model worked quite well. There were some interesting mathematical analogies made, too. The “family factor” within the model can never be zero, for example. The argument here is that if the family factor truly is zero, it is not a family business and the approach is therefore inappropriate in any case. For most businesses, however, the family factor does exist and although it may be positive or negative it influences the business nonetheless. There are useful sections, too, on different approaches and some of the comments on legislation as a route to conflict resolution will ring a bitter bell with many a family business.

This is probably a text of interest to consultants and those within their own family business who are looking for alternative approaches. However, there is also scope for academic researchers to consider this text as a “framework” within which family business conflict can be better understood and addressed at a practical level. There is far more academic research to be done on the impact of conflict within a family business and this book does a good job of highlighting some of the reasons why this is so.

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