
Editorial: Engaging entrepreneurship's largest unanswered questions

Editorial

333

The *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development (JSBED)* is dedicated to the continued development and growth of the distinct field of entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurship research at universities is important to society, where it is understood widely by scholars, practitioners and policymakers that most new jobs come from entrepreneurial ventures.

What is less understood is that most of these new jobs do not yet exist. They form based on complex and dynamic environmental changes. Thus, when new jobs emerge at entrepreneurial ventures, they have radically novel aspects. Similarly, individuals who become entrepreneurs often find themselves performing in exceptional ways and in places that they never imagined were possible. Defining something practically when it is radically novel and does not yet exist makes for a grueling research challenge. The challenge becomes almost impossible for traditional research approaches that focus on what is already known and reliable. Yet, no matter how challenging it may be, high-impact entrepreneurship research is more important than ever to universities and societies worldwide.

The students who depend on universities for their education play an especially vital role in the field of entrepreneurship research. It is obvious that they will occupy many of the entrepreneurial jobs described above. What is less obvious is that the current generation of university students has unique characteristics and exceptionally strong and diverse interests in entrepreneurship education. Here, the challenge for the field is to publish high-impact entrepreneurship research that informs university courses and curricula in ways that are distinct and practical.

For all these reasons, entrepreneurship research is important to societies and universities worldwide. One way to begin to envision the future of a scholarly field is to examine its past. Entrepreneurial activities have been chronicled for centuries. However, entrepreneurship research based on distinct theories not imported from other areas is much newer. I personally estimate the formal field of entrepreneurship research to be only 40–50 years old (Murphy, 2009; Murphy *et al.*, 2006, 2019).

As a newer field in historic terms, entrepreneurship offers unmatched opportunities to scholars who are inspired by large unanswered questions and wish to engage them conceptually and empirically. Distinct new theories are necessary to help conceptualize the radical novelty of entrepreneurial phenomena. Rigorous and intentionally-designed methodologies are instrumental when datasets are messy and scores are unreliable. The results of such entrepreneurship research are of special interest not only to other scholars, but also to practitioners and policymakers.

JSBED welcomes the submission of such entrepreneurship research. Our scholarly and practitioner review boards place great value on studies that intend to contribute to the future of the entrepreneurship field. The editorial and publishing teams seek to publish entrepreneurship research that engages the field's largest unanswered questions.

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