



## Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Educational Entrepreneurship

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This paper explores the constructs of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial orientation to education with an eye to applying these constructs in the field of education. It traces the evolution of the definition of entrepreneurship from seminal to contemporary literature and assesses various definitions before proposing the use of Morris et al. 's (1994) composite definition for use in research in education. It then investigates two conceptualizations of the entrepreneurial orientation construct, the composite approach and the multidimensional approach. The multidimensional approach proposed by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) is of particular interest, as it is applicable in a wide range of contexts. These understandings of entrepreneurial orientation are then applied to educational entrepreneurship in general and to the educational entrepreneurship

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framework proposed by Webber and Scott (2008) in particular. Key elements of the definition of entrepreneurship and of entrepreneurial orientation appear in the educational entrepreneurship framework, linking the framework to entrepreneurship research. The findings of this paper have implications for researchers who wish to situate their research on education within the long tradition of research on entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Educational Entrepreneurship



## ความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ แนวคิดเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ และความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษา

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งานวิจัยขึ้นนี้ศึกษาเรื่องความเป็นผู้ประกอบการและแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษา โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์คือการนำเอาแนวคิดดังกล่าวมาใช้ในด้านการศึกษา งานวิจัยนี้รวมคำจำกัดความของคำว่า “ความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ” ที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไปตั้งแต่อดีตจนถึงปัจจุบัน มีการประเมินคำจำกัดความต่าง ๆ แล้วจึงเสนอให้ใช้คำจำกัดความที่รวมขึ้นของมอริสและคณะ ( Morris et al, 1994) ในการวิจัยทางด้านการศึกษา จากนั้นจึงศึกษาแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับการเป็นผู้ประกอบการ 2 แบบ อันได้แก่ แนวคิดแบบรวม และแนวคิดแบบหลายมิติ โดยให้ความสนใจในแนวคิดแบบหลายมิติของลัมพ์กินและเดสส์ (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) เป็นพิเศษ เนื่องจากสามารถนำไปใช้ได้ในหลากหลายบริบท ความเข้าใจเรื่องแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการจะสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้กับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษา และทฤษฎีความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษาของ เว็บเบอร์ และสก็อตต์ (Webber & Scott, 2008) ได้ องค์ประกอบหลักของคำจำกัด

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ความและแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการนั้น ปรากฏอยู่ในทฤษฎีความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษา ซึ่งเชื่อมโยงทฤษฎีดังกล่าวเข้ากับงานวิจัยเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ ข้อสรุปของงานวิจัยนี้จะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อผู้วิจัยที่ต้องการศึกษาเกี่ยวกับความเป็นมาของงานวิจัยในเรื่องความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ

**คำสำคัญ:** ความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ แนวคิดเกี่ยวกับความเป็นผู้ประกอบการ ความเป็นผู้ประกอบการด้านการศึกษา



## Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Educational Entrepreneurship

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### Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate entrepreneurship and educational entrepreneurship with an eye to the application of these theories in understanding the applicability of these constructs to education. First, this review will trace the development of the definition of entrepreneurship from the seminal authors to the present day. It will evaluate the available definitions, and select a definition appropriate for use in further research. Next, it will evaluate the multiple approaches to creating an entrepreneurial orientation construct, again selecting a construct appropriate for use in further research on education. Then the review will explore the literature on educational entrepreneurship itself. This literature review draws heavily on theoretical works on entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, and educational entrepreneurship. Seminal works in all

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areas are included, whereas quantitative research has been excluded. The objective of this literature review is to provide theoretical frameworks for future qualitative research, and many of the available quantitative studies on entrepreneurship are only tangentially related to this goal.

## **Defining Entrepreneurship**

The term *entrepreneurship* is used widely; however, the definitions that researchers provide are often vague and sometimes inconsistent. This impacts the state of entrepreneurship research, which has become a “hodgepodge” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, 217) because of the broad use of this label. Before addressing other areas of research, this review will explore the definition of entrepreneurship.

## **Seminal Definitions**

Theorists have used the term *entrepreneurship* for hundreds of years, beginning perhaps with Jean Baptiste Say circa 1800 (Drucker, 1985). Say observed, “The entrepreneur shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield” (as quoted in Smith and Petersen,



2006, p. 17). Say's ideas were further developed by theorists such as Mill (1848), who posited that risk was an essential element of entrepreneurship. Schumpeter, who pioneered the idea of creative destruction (Schiller & Crewson, 1997), claims that Mill popularized the term *entrepreneurship* in economic circles (Carland, Hoy, & Carland, 1988). To Schumpeter, capitalist markets were able to function effectively because of the drive for innovation and entrepreneurship (Schumpeter 1934; Schiller & Crewson, 1997). In his view, entrepreneurship was critical in effecting change in capitalist societies (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Schumpeter's definition of entrepreneurship was much broader than Say's, as it included not only individuals seeking to profit by shifting resources to areas of higher productivity but also managers of existing businesses and individuals involved in the public and nonprofit sectors (Schiller & Crewson, 1997). Subsequent theorists continued to broaden the definition of entrepreneurship and to apply it in domains other than business, resulting in hundreds of divergent definitions (Morris, Lewis, & Sexton, 1994).

## Contemporary Definitions

The many definitions of *entrepreneurship* can be classified into distinct categories. In an analysis of 75 common definitions of entrepreneurship, Morris et al. (1994) found that the top five most common key terms were “starting/ founding/ creating, new business/new venture, innovation/new products/new market, pursuit of opportunity” and “risk-taking/risk management/uncertainty” (23). The breadth of these key terms indicate that entrepreneurship now encompasses much more than it did originally. This breadth has also led theorists such as Morris et al. (1994) and Gartner (1990) to attempt to categorize these definitions.

Morris et al. (1994) advance a system of categorization that separates perspectives on entrepreneurship into seven categories: creation of wealth, creating of enterprise, creation of innovation, creation of change, creation of employment, creation of value, and creation of growth. The first perspective, the creation of wealth, is consistent with Say's strictly economic definition ( Smith and Petersen, 2006). Some theorists, such as Gartner, argue that the creation of enterprise is essential to entrepreneurship, and thus that activities that do not result in the creation of enterprise are not entrepreneurial activities (as cited in Carland, Hoy, & Carland 1988).



Other theorists, such as Drucker (1985) connect entrepreneurship and innovation. According to Drucker (1985), entrepreneurship is innovation in response to changes in the environment, such as industry structure, demographics, or new knowledge. As for change, Morris et al. (1994) found change to be the fifteenth most common key term in their study of 75 definitions of entrepreneurship. For yet other theorists, such as Schiller and Crewson (2001), entrepreneurship can be understood to mean self-employment. Others, such as Amit and Zott (2001) propose a close link between entrepreneurship and value creation. The concept of entrepreneurship as proactive growth is present in Sexton and Bowman-Upton (1991) among others.

Whereas Morris et al. (1994) identified major perspectives on the meaning of entrepreneurship, Gartner (1990) identified eight common themes in the discussion of entrepreneurship: “entrepreneurs, innovation, organization creation, creating value, profit or non-profit, growth, uniqueness, and owner-manager” (15). The majority of these areas overlap: innovation, creation of organizations/employment, creation of value, and creation of growth. Furthermore, Morris et al.’s category of employment creation is similar, to Gartner’s theme of owner-manager. One major difference is that Gartner (1990) includes profit or non-profit in his definitions.

This provides an additional subdivision within the field of entrepreneurship, dividing entrepreneurs based on their involvement with a specific type of organization.

The various definitions of entrepreneurship posited by researchers typically contain more than one of the themes described above. For example, George and Zahra (2002) define entrepreneurship as “new venture creation, innovation, and risk taking” (5). The first two components of the definition, new venture creation and innovation, fall neatly into the classifications described above. The third, risk taking, is closely linked to the seminal definition offered by Mill (1848). While categorization schemes are useful, they may also give the false impression that researchers are proposing monodimensional definitions of entrepreneurship, which is not the case.

After analyzing main perspectives on entrepreneurship prevalent in the literature, Morris et al. (1994) synthesize the perspectives as follows:

Entrepreneurship is a process activity. It generally involves the following inputs: an opportunity; one or more proactive individuals; an organizational context; risk, innovation; and resources. It can produce the following outcomes: a new venture or enterprise; value; new products or processes; profit or personal benefit; and growth. (p. 26)



The researchers are careful to indicate that entrepreneurship is variable, i.e., it is heavily dependent on context. For this reason, even a well-constructed definition may be unable to sufficiently capture the nature of entrepreneurship (Morris et al. 1994). Using the degree and frequency of entrepreneurship as the two main dimensions of variability, the researchers demonstrate five possible scenarios: a low frequency, low degree scenario is periodic/incremental; a low frequency, high degree scenario is periodic/discontinuous; a high frequency, low degree scenario is continuous/incremental and a high frequency, high degree scenario is revolutionary. Finally, the moderate frequency, moderate degree scenario is dynamic (Morris et al., 1994). This attempt to make the definition of entrepreneurship contingent on context does provide flexibility.

### **Arguments against Redefining Entrepreneurship**

A great deal of time and attention has been dedicated to defining entrepreneurship. In the eyes of some researchers, such as Low (2001), entrepreneurship researchers have spent “disproportionate unproductive time” (p. 18) on this effort. Kilby (1971) compares the effort to define entrepreneurship to the hunting of an imaginary beast: “no one so far has succeeded in capturing him. All who claim to have

caught sight of him report that he is enormous, but they disagree on his particularities” (p. 1). Veciana (2007) furthers this argument, claiming that a scientific approach to the study of entrepreneurship would not necessarily begin by formulating an opinion. According to Veciana (2007), many researchers indulge in a tempting but counterproductive activity. After reviewing many existing definitions of entrepreneurship and finding them wanting, the researchers propose yet another new definition. As hundreds of definitions already exist, covering a vast range of possibilities, time spent on this redefinition may indeed be “unproductive” (Low, 2001, p. 18). For this reason, this literature review will not reformulate the definition of entrepreneurship; rather, it will use the contingent definition proposed by Morris et al. (1994), which is quoted above. This definition is suitably flexible, so it can be applied in fields not traditionally associated with entrepreneurship, such as education.

## **Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)**

The entrepreneurial orientation (EO) construct provides an alternative perspective on entrepreneurship. Rather than focusing on the definition of entrepreneurship itself, this construct focuses on the way that firms approach entrepreneurship. This construct began to appear in the 1970s or 1980s, although the term *entrepreneurial*



*orientation* was not used until the 1990s. Interest in this construct has grown to the point that it is now “arguably one of the most studied constructs in entrepreneurship literature” (George & Marino, 2011, p. 990) that enjoys a “strong and growing presence” (Covin & Lumpkin 2011, p. 859) in the literature. Covin and Wales (2012) trace the roots of this construct back to Mintzberg’s 1973 research on the “entrepreneurial mode” (p. 679), and they credit Miller with designing a three-dimensional construct in 1983, a construct that included “innovativeness, risk taking, and proactiveness” (p. 680). In contrast with Covin and Wales (2012), Covin and Lumpkin (2011) indicate that “most researchers” (p. 855) credit Miller, not Mintzberg, with originating the EO construct, although Miller never used the term *entrepreneurial orientation*. In looking back at his 1983 article, Miller (2011) himself notes that he neither mentioned EO specifically nor intended “to develop an EO factor” (p. 873). Furthermore, Miller (2011) was surprised by the popularity of his early article, in which he had meant merely to provide a “crude typology of firms” (Miller, 1983, p. 770).

The seminal work on EO by Mintzberg and by Miller has developed into two distinct bodies of research: the “composite definition approach” (Covin & Lumpkin 2011, p. 859) and the “multidimensional approach” (Covin & Lumpkin 2011, 859). The

composite approach is found in early articles by Miller (1983). Although Miller (1983) subdivided entrepreneurship into three variables — innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking — there is little indication that the three variables would vary independently based on context. A similar approach is found in Covin and Slevin (1989), who discuss “entrepreneurial strategic posture” (p. 75) as a unified construct. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) provide a contrasting, multidimensional approach to the EO construct.

### **Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation**

Observing that the lack of consensus as to the definition of entrepreneurship has been a barrier to further developments of theory, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) furnish an alternative: the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) construct. This construct is related to the ideas of content (i.e., *what* is done) and process (i.e., *how* something is done) in the literature on strategic management. Rather than emphasizing *what* entrepreneurship is, they emphasize *how* it is done. Taking “new entry” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 136), either in the form of starting a new firm or embarking on a new venture within an existing firm, as the basic meaning of entrepreneurship, they distinguish five dimensions of *how* entrepreneurship is



undertaken: “autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness” (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, p. 136). In applying the EO, researchers must be aware that its applicability is contingent on context and that it has been designed for a specific level of analysis. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) explain that both the impact of EO on performance and the relationship among the five dimensions of EO will vary depending on the context. This is a key difference between the composite and multidimensional approaches to EO. Also, because new entry is generally a firm-level action - as is true in classical economics, “the small business firm is simply an extension of the individual who is in charge” (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, p. 138) - the EO has been designed for analysis at the organizational level (Lumpkin & Dess 1996). Using the EO construct, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and subsequent researchers using their framework are able to avoid some of the controversy associated with defining entrepreneurship.

Dess and Lumpkin (2005) have continued to develop and clarify their EO construct since its original publication in 1996, however the five core elements have remained unchanged. The first element, autonomy, was originally defined as “the ability and will to be self-directed in the pursuit of opportunities” (Lumpkin & Dess,

1996, p. 140). In a more recent article, the authors explain that many of the best ideas for entrepreneurship come from the “bottom up” (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005, p. 149) and that these ideas can be stifled if employees do not have autonomy. The second element, innovativeness, “reflects a firm’s tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty, and creative processes” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, 142). In defining this construct, the authors refer to one of the seminal theorists of entrepreneurship, Schumpeter, and his concept of creative destruction (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). A more recent article defines innovativeness as “a firm’s efforts to find new opportunities and novel solutions .... innovativeness requires that firms depart from existing technologies and practices and venture beyond the current state of the art” (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005, p. 150). The researchers note that innovativeness involves serious risks, as not all innovations will succeed (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005). The third element, risk taking, is characterized by actions such as incurring debt or committing significant proportions of a firm’s assets (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). This is later clarified as “a firm’s willingness to seize a venture opportunity ... and to act boldly without knowing the consequences” (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005, p. 152). All business ventures involve risk of some kind, but firms with an entrepreneurial orientation are more



tolerant of risk than other firms. The fourth element, proactiveness, involves “taking initiative by anticipating and pursuing new opportunities” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 146). This “forward-looking perspective” (Dess & Lumpkin 2005, 150) is important for companies that hope to lead their industries. Finally, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) assert that competitive aggressiveness, or “an aggressive stance and intense competition” (p. 148), is important to a new venture’s survival. A firm that demonstrates these characteristics is more likely to survive. It is important to emphasize that although many entrepreneurial firms do exhibit all of these behaviors, the five dimensions may vary independently.

The two approaches to defining EO, the composite approach and the multidimensional approach, have continued to appear in entrepreneurship literature. The composite approach has appeared in articles by authors including Zahra and Neubaum (1998) and Avlonitis and Salavou (2007). The multidimensional approach in the form popularized by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) has also appeared frequently, for example in the articles of Voss, Voss, and Moorman (2005) and Pearce, Fritz, and Davis (2010). Since Lumpkin and Dess proposed their five- dimensional EO construct in 1996, no significantly adapted multidimensional EO constructs have received

significant attention in the literature (Covin & Wales, 2011). While both approaches have their merits, the contingent, multidimensional approach may be more appropriate for application in a wide variety of contexts.

## **Educational Entrepreneurship**

An increasing number of journal articles have been devoted to the phenomenon of educational entrepreneurship (Man, 2010). Several researchers have proposed definitions of educational entrepreneurs. Smith and Petersen (2006) defined the educational entrepreneur as “a rare breed of innovator whose characteristics and activities may lead to the transformation -not merely the slight improvement - of the public education system” (Smith & Petersen, 2006). Peterson (2009) does not define educational entrepreneurs, but notes, “education entrepreneurs, acting like their counterparts in private business, are infusing certain corners of America’s moribund public education system with innovation and modernization” (p. 7). Speaking of educational entrepreneurs, Hess (2007) observes, “Unconventional thinkers have waded into the world of K-12 education, founded influential organization, and upended conventions” (p. 1). These definitions are similar in that they emphasize innovation as a key characteristic of educational entrepreneurs.



## Dimensions of Educational Entrepreneurship

Webber and Scott (2008) propose a six-dimensional framework for educational entrepreneurship: “innovative behavior, networking, time- space communication framework, local- global perspective, educational organizations as knowledge centers, and integrated face-to-face and Internet-based learning” (p. 1). The first dimension, innovative behavior, also appears in various EO constructs, including the seminal construct proposed by Miller (1983) and the multidimensional construct described by Lumpkin and Dess (1996); however, Webber and Scott (2008) define innovative behavior as “generation of knowledge and skills” (p. 4), a definition which, in contrast with the definition provided by (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005), does not include technological innovations.

The second dimension of Webber and Scott’ s ( 2008) framework, networking, also has “roots” (p. 2) in business studies. According to Webber and Scott (2008), networking is of growing importance, and it is often a primary determinant of whether a company will be able to adapt to changes in its environment and survive. In the field of business, authors such as Fuellhart and Glasmeier (2003) describe the range networking strategies that firms use to find necessary information about their environment. They

emphasize that networking “ does not presume relationships of spatial proximity” (p. 232). Networking is not included in the common EO constructs; however, it is tangentially related to proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness, two components of EO construct proposed by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). Networking would provide a company with the information necessary to be proactive and to engage aggressively with the competition.

The third dimension is time - space communication framework. Webber and Scott (2008) define time -space communication framework as “ local and distributed communication, learning through space and time” (p. 4), including both synchronous and asynchronous communication ( Webber & Scott, 2008) . This dimension of the educational entrepreneurship framework also has roots in business in the work of Van Geenhuizen ( 2004) , who examined the use of emergent strategies in the manufacturing and communication sectors, specifically “ proximity needs and what those needs imply for elimination of physical segments from value chains and insertion of virtual segments in these chains” (p. 5).

The fourth, fifth, and sixth dimensions of the educational entrepreneurship framework proposed by Webber and Scott (2008) — “local-global perspective, educational organizations as centers of



knowledge, and integrating face- to- face and Internet- based learning" (p. 4) - are closely related. All three involve the creating and sharing of knowledge through Internet-based and face-to-face interaction. Local- global perspective relies on an "international network of faculty members" who enable learners to "move beyond ethnocentrism" (Webber & Scott, 2008, 2). To engage in educational entrepreneurship, educational organizations must pay "attention to access, resources, and community needs" (4) in order to be centers of knowledge. The idea of meeting needs in the "active search for opportunities" (Mintzberg, 1973, p. 45) is also found in the business sector. The final element of the framework, integrating Internet-based and face-to-face learning, places educational organizations in a wider arena, where they must face increased competition. To succeed in this environment, they must demonstrate competitive aggressiveness, a key element in Lumpkin and Dess's (1996) EO construct. The use of newly emerging technologies has potential for transformative effects on education as well as on industry, providing opportunities for educational entrepreneurship.

Opportunities for educational entrepreneurs abound. As Hess (2007) observes, "To an unprecedented degree, this is the era of educational entrepreneurship" (p. 1). Webber and Scott's (2008)

framework, which borrows heavily from research on corporate entrepreneurship but focuses more on innovation and less on risk and autonomy than the EO construct, provides a tool for examining entrepreneurship in education. Webber and Scott's framework also focuses heavily on the opportunities created by new technologies that have the potential to revolutionize education. The vast potential of these technologies raises serious questions: “In the end, an entrepreneurial perspective raises the question: In the 21st century, is it possible to educate children in radically more effective ways?” (Hess, 2007, p. 11).

## Conclusion

The end results of this review are promising: a clear but flexible definition of entrepreneurship; a five - dimensional entrepreneurial orientation construct; and a six - dimensional educational entrepreneurship construct that is based on both educational theory and business theory. The definition, from Morris et al. (1994) is a synthesis of many other definitions that have been proposed over the years, and it is applicable outside of the corporate world. The five- dimensional EO construct by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) has withstood the test of time; it is still in use in its original



form. Like the definition of entrepreneurship proposed by Morris et al. (1994), this construct is flexible and applicable in a variety of contexts. Finally, the six-dimensional framework for understanding educational entrepreneurship that Webber and Scott (2008) propose incorporates many ideas from both business theory and educational theory.

The literature review has revealed that there is a long tradition of research in this area; however, there are certainly gaps in the literature that can be investigated. As Miller (2011), one of the pioneers of the EO construct, recently observed, there have been “too few qualitative studies” (878) about EO. The study of EO is a burgeoning field, and it can provide valuable insights in education as well as in business.

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