

6-7-2008

THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A RESEARCH DOMAIN: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP THEORY (SUMMARY)

T. L. Hill

Temple University, USA, tl.hill@temple.edu

Tanvi H. Kothari

Temple University, USA

Matt Shea

Temple University, USA

Recommended Citation

Hill, T. L.; Kothari, Tanvi H.; and Shea, Matt (2008) "THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A RESEARCH DOMAIN: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP THEORY (SUMMARY)," *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*: Vol. 28: Iss. 21, Article 4.

Available at: <http://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol28/iss21/4>

This Summary is brought to you for free and open access by the Entrepreneurship at Babson at Digital Knowledge at Babson. It has been accepted for inclusion in Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research by an authorized administrator of Digital Knowledge at Babson. For more information, please contact digitalknowledge@babson.edu.

SUMMARY

THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A RESEARCH DOMAIN: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP THEORY

T. L. Hill, Temple University, USA
Tanvi H. Kothari, Temple University, USA
Matt Shea, Temple University, USA

Principal Topic

Two decades ago, entrepreneurship scholarship began to shift from a focus on the supply of entrepreneurs and what makes entrepreneurs special to the social and economic opportunity, incentive, network and institutional structures that support or hinder the founding of new enterprises (Gartner, 1988; Thornton, 1999). This shift has led to tremendous increase in the volume, rigor, and legitimacy of entrepreneurship research and notable theoretical strides in areas such as opportunity structure (Shane & Venkatraman, 2000). Somewhat neglected in this flowering has been the institutional context that frames the process (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Baumol, 1996) and the social, contextual, path-dependent dynamics that guide its evolution (Hoang & Antoncic, 2003; Low & Abrahamson, 1997). The study of social entrepreneurship seems poised to make a similar shift in emphasis from actor and enterprise to process and context and from exploration of a phenomenon to contribution to theory (Mair et. al., 2006; Austin et. al., 2006). Our research shows both that the shift to theory has begun and how the study of social entrepreneurship promises new insight into the under-appreciated social and institutional contexts of entrepreneurship.

Method

We use semantic network analysis to conduct a conceptual meta-analysis of the literature on social entrepreneurship. Semantic network analysis is a type of content analysis that identifies and maps the relationships between recurring words and contexts, thus suggesting underlying patterns of meaning that reappear in multiple texts (Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002; Weber, 1990).

Results and Implications

Our meta-analysis identifies the patterns of concepts within the definitional, theoretical, and case-oriented social entrepreneurship research. The most central and influential concepts are oriented around enterprises, entrepreneurship, and stakeholders. Further, the evolution of the sub-field shows an increasing emphasis on the management of multiple interests and stakeholders and in the institutional forces and social contexts which create and expose opportunity and promote or hinder social entrepreneurship. Specifically, we find that the study of social entrepreneurship highlights the role of social structures in supporting entrepreneurship, the role of entrepreneurial agency in changing such social structures, and the social aspects of incentives and discipline.

CONTACT: TL Hill; tl.hill@temple.edu; (T): 215-204-3079; (F): 215-204-3080; 201 Speakman Hall, 1810 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122.