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REGIONAL CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS: A BOURDIEUIAN APPROACH (SUMMARY)

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≈ SUMMARY ≈

**REGIONAL CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL
INTENTIONS: A BOURDIEUIAN APPROACH**

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Principal Topic

This paper examines the mechanisms by which regional culture influences entrepreneurs' decisions to start software companies in three Canadian cities: Waterloo, Ottawa, and Calgary. It is hypothesized that regional cultural contexts and expectations will be a significant influence in explaining both why and how entrepreneurs start and build their firms. This work contributes to an increasing interest among entrepreneurship researchers about the role of regional contexts and cultures on the entrepreneurship process. This paper build on existing Bourdieuian approaches to entrepreneurship by placing them within a geographic framework. A regional Bourdieuian approach provides better tools for both researchers and policy makers to understand the complex interdependencies between regional cultures, contexts, and entrepreneurship

Method

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were carried out with 109 entrepreneurs, investors and economic development officials in the technology sectors of three Canadian cities. Interviews are used to better understand the connections between local economic and cultural conditions and entrepreneur's practices.

Results and Implications

Results show statistically significant differences in the reasons why entrepreneurs chose to start their firms between the three cities. The reasons for these differing intentions are shown to be associated with the regions' unique entrepreneurial fields which create social and economic structures that promote different entrepreneurial practices related to the startup process.

These results provide empirical evidence for the usefulness of a Bourdieuian framework for understanding entrepreneurial practices. While the past three years have seen a bourgeoning interest in the use of Bourdieu to understand the entrepreneurship, this stream of research has yet to examine the evolution and influence and fields from a regional perspective. Such a view explains not only the origin of regional entrepreneurial cultures, but also how these cultures influence entrepreneurial practices and how these practices in turn dynamically influence regional cultures. A regional Bourdieuian perspective is critical for understanding the formation and reproduction of both entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial environments and analyzing prospects for entrepreneurship-led regional economic development. This research contributes to qualitative research methodologies for entrepreneurship that strike a balance between the role of social structure and individual agency in economic practices.

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