DOMESTICATING BRICOLAGE A SECOND TIME: WHAT DOES THE WAY BY WHICH BRICOLAGE IS APPROPRIATED BY ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH TELL US ABOUT THE FIELD? (SUMMARY)

Raffi Duymedjian
Grenoble Ecole de Management, France, raffi.duymedjian@grenoble-em.com

Frank Janssen
Louvain School of Management, Belgium

Guillaume Ferrante
Ecole de Management de Normandie, France
SUMMARY

DOMESTICATING BRICOLAGE A SECOND TIME: WHAT DOES THE WAY BY WHICH BRICOLAGE IS APPROPRIATED BY ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH TELL US ABOUT THE FIELD?

Raffi Duymedjian, Grenoble Ecole de Management, France
Frank Janssen, Louvain School of Management, Belgium
Guillaume Ferrante, Ecole de Management de Normandie, France

Principal Topic

This article examines how research in entrepreneurship has integrated the concept of bricolage since the early 2000s. A substantial difference seems to exist between the definition and the use of the concept made by entrepreneurial theory and the foundational source of the notion of bricolage, i.e. Levi-Strauss’s book The Savage Mind (1966). We assume that this translation of an anthropologic concept into a managerial one is symptomatic of the paradigms structuring the field of entrepreneurship and investigate possible reasons why this field may have difficulties accepting the subversive aspects of bricolage.

Method

This paper is based on a comprehensive literature review of the concept of bricolage in entrepreneurship. We identified foundational papers on entrepreneurial bricolage, and articles explicitly using bricolage in the field of entrepreneurship. We conducted a critical analysis investigating whether the concept of entrepreneurial bricolage has been transformed or stabilized over time, as well as its use in practical observations participating to its definition. The result is compared to the levi-straussian definition of bricolage to find out if the subversive dimension of bricolage has been maintained or if it has been discarded to protect the core characteristics of the classical view of entrepreneurship.

Results and Implications

In the way entrepreneurship seizes bricolage, we think that we are witnessing a second domestication of bricolage allowing researchers to preserve the rational/heroic representation of the entrepreneur. Critical research revealed that this access to the status of “heroic symbol” comes from an economic and political, but also cultural and moral, construction in which qualities such as efficacy, innovation or creativity are opposed to inefficacy, routine or disillusion (Jones and Spicer, 2009). Baker (2007) noted that one of the major obstacles to the dissemination of entrepreneurial bricolage in education might come from the “shameful” aspect of doing bricolage. We intend to show that shame might not be the sole obstacle to overcome and that the field will profit from a reflexive analysis on its somehow misleading appropriation of the concept of bricolage.

CONTACT: Raffi Duymedjian; raffi.duymedjian@grenoble-em.com; (T): +33 4 76 70 61 26; Grenoble Ecole de Management, 12 rue Pierre Sémard, 38 000 Grenoble.