

Chapter 1

The Digital Edge for Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT

Since the conceptualization of entrepreneurship in the digital age is among the current issues, it has not been sufficiently researched yet. Addressing the issue is particularly important for Asian countries that are reorienting competition. This chapter, which deals with the digital ecosystem and entrepreneurship ecosystem in terms of innovation framework, aims to present a comprehensive framework by drawing attention to the sub-dimensions of the subject. In the chapter in which a new research agenda that will fill the gap in the understanding of entrepreneurship in the digital age is outlined, evaluations are made for Asian entrepreneurs after revealing the dynamics of the digital entrepreneurship ecosystem, which is one of the important tools of value creation.

INTRODUCTION

There is a significant gap in the conceptualization of entrepreneurship in the digital age. In addressing this gap, it is necessary to consider the digital ecosystem and the entrepreneurship ecosystem together. It cannot be said that the entrepreneurship literature has not adequately addressed the issue yet. Parker (2005) uses the following expressions while explaining this situation; “The reason entrepreneurship literature has not examined the billion-dollar digital startup is because entrepreneurship research has focused on self-employment as both a business owner and self-employed.” Entrepreneurship literature focuses on thousands of small startups, which often fail to achieve sufficient success due to a lack of customer base. In other words, entrepreneurship is not focused on finding customers before starting a business. In the digital economy, the opposite is true, each startup can have millions of customers, even though there are far fewer startups. The role of users and customers is therefore worth examining at least as much as the role of entrepreneurship.

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In a sense, traditional entrepreneurship research has ignored both the role played by digital technologies in entrepreneurship and the role played by users and intermediaries in digital entrepreneurship. In short, there is a major gap in understanding entrepreneurship in the digital age, as a consolidated way of entrepreneurship research has not been sought to examine the impact of digitalization. In other words, entrepreneurship research has not yet been contextualized within the digital economy regarding how it will change due to digitalization. Current knowledge of the impact of digitalization can be obtained from other disciplines related to digitalization and business, such as marketing or management information systems. Therefore, predictions can be made about the impact of digitization and how it might change the way people understand entrepreneurship.

Multidisciplinary studies have great potential to provide a theoretical framework of multilateral platforms to better understand the digital entrepreneurship ecosystem. Because of its broad perspective, this section of the book is important because it outlines a new research agenda that will fill the gap in understanding entrepreneurship in the digital age. In this context, first of all, after the digital entrepreneurship ecosystem, the basic dynamics that make up this system are mentioned and the innovation ecosystem is started. Finally, the study, which preserves its originality with the title of Asian Entrepreneurship, tries to present a different perspective by shifting the reader's direction from the West to the East.

DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM

When it comes to digital entrepreneurship, it is necessary to talk about digital ecosystems, since there is no single technology. Thus, the subject of the enterprise evolves into entrepreneurs who, in addition to the original discovered in 1911, create digital companies and innovative products and services for many users and agents in the global economy. Stam (2015) takes this assumption further and argues that regional policies toward entrepreneurship will change the focus. According to the author, the main goal of increasing the quantity of entrepreneurship is going through a transition process towards increasing the quality of entrepreneurship today. So, the next step will be the transition from entrepreneurial policy to entrepreneurial economic policy. This perspective highlights the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach as a new framework that accommodates these transitions. Emphasizing the context of productive entrepreneurship, this approach views entrepreneurship not only as the output of the system but also as a critical factor in creating and maintaining a healthy ecosystem. From this point of view, this section, which aims to fill the gap in understanding the role of intermediaries and users in the digital economy, deals with digitalization not from a single aspect, but from an ecosystem that includes different technologies.

Digital ecosystems that mimic biological ecosystems refer to complex and interconnected systems and their underlying infrastructures, in which all components interact and exhibit self-organizing, scalable, and sustainable behaviors as a whole. Starting from a similar point, the concept of the digital ecosystem can also be discussed. The digital ecosystem (DE), a terminology that emerged in the early 2000s, "...to increase system utility, deliver benefits, and promote knowledge sharing, internal and external collaboration, and systems innovation" (Li et al., 2012). DE can be applied in business, knowledge management, service, social networks, and education. Digital ecosystems refer to complex and interconnected systems and their underlying infrastructures in which all components interact and exhibit self-organizing, scalable, and sustainable behaviors as a whole. Digital ecosystems are made up of suppliers, applications, customers, trading partners, third-party data service providers, and all respective technologies (Behera & Dash, 2019).

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