Call for Papers

Small Business and Entrepreneurship in Times of Crisis: Latest Developments and Trends

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Introduction

This special issue will enhance scholarly understanding of how small businesses and entrepreneurs navigate and operate in times of crisis and pinpoint the effectiveness of different forms of institutional support. A crisis is an unexpected event that poses a significant threat to economies, business organisations and individuals. Over the last three decades we have witnessed several major global crises that have affected the economy including the Asian Financial Crisis, the Global Financial Crisis and the COVID-19 crisis. At a regional level, we have also witnessed crises caused by natural disasters i.e. the tsunamis in South-East Asia and Japan and bush/forest fires in Australia, California and Southern Europe, and those resulting from political unrest i.e. the political crisis in Hong Kong and the refugee crisis in the Middle East. Most recently, the COVID-19 crisis has had a catastrophic impact on small businesses in many ways. It has led to a multitude of issues including reduced business activity, temporary business closures, staffing issues and supply chain interruptions.

Crises in their multitude of forms have huge implications for small business and entrepreneurship, not to mention those whose livelihoods depend on these ventures. Despite this, limited work has examined how small businesses and entrepreneurs deal with crises (Herbane, 2010). Researchers have only recently started to examine the impact of crises on entrepreneurial activity and success (Bartz and Winkler, 2016; Davidsson and Gordon, 2016; Devece et al., 2016; Giotopoulos et al., 2017; Williams and Vorley, 2017), the entrepreneurial financing ecosystem (Block and Sandner, 2009), and how entrepreneurs navigate and operate in times of crisis (Cucculelli and Peruzzi, 2020; Doern, 2016; Mayr et al., 2017; Ogawa and Tanaka, 2013). Compared to larger organizations, small businesses and entrepreneurs are
confronted with particular challenges in times of crisis (Shane, 2011), but they might also be in a better position to recognize, evaluate and exploit new opportunities associated with a crisis (Davidsson, 2015; Shepherd & Williams, 2018), with implications for the businesses and the wider economies of which they form a part.

This special issue will advance our theoretical understanding of how business owners make sense of and respond to crises, as well as examine the effects of crises on entrepreneurial activity and small business performance. In addition, it will allow us to examine the role played by policy makers in supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs in times of crisis. In doing so it will build on recent work including a review of prior work on entrepreneurship in times of crisis (Doern et al., 2019).

We welcome submissions from a variety of disciplines including economics, sociology, finance, strategy and psychology. Both conceptual and empirical work will be considered. We would like this Special Issue to offer a series of articles that encourage theoretical development and empirical examination of topics including:

1. In the face of economic crises how should entrepreneurs/small businesses adapt their business models?
2. How should entrepreneurs/small businesses minimize the impact of economic crises on their employees and customers?
3. What strategies should entrepreneurs/small businesses adopt to right size their businesses in the times of crisis?
4. What factors predict the likelihood of business survival in an economic crisis?
5. What opportunities do economic crises provide entrepreneurs/small businesses for developing new innovative business models and products/services?
6. What ethical responsibilities do entrepreneurs/small businesses owe their employees, customers, suppliers and society more generally in times of crisis?
7. Do economic crises result in a growth in entrepreneurial activity as wage employment falls?
8. What types of policies should governments implement to support entrepreneurs and small businesses in times of crisis? Which policies are most effective in fostering business survival and performance in the short to medium-term?
9. How should small businesses prepare for economic crises? What risk mitigation strategies are most effective and why?
10. What are implications of crises for the mental health and psychological well-being of entrepreneurs and small business owners? What are effective psychological coping strategies?
11. How do the different markets of entrepreneurial and small business finance react to a crisis? How do banks, venture capitalists and crowdfunders react? How are entrepreneurs and small business owners affected?

The deadline for submission of papers is 18 December 2020. The journal submission site will be open for submissions from Friday 4 December 2020. The Special Issue is scheduled to be published in March 2022. Papers must be original and comply with ISBJ submission guidelines. Please refer http://isb.sagepub.com/ for submission guidelines and a link to the on-line
submission system. In the online system please ensure you submit your paper within Manuscript Type: ‘Special Issue: Small Business and Entrepreneurship in Times of Crisis’.

Questions and informal enquiries should be directed to: a.newman@deakin.edu.au or any of the other editors.

References


