



# (Re)defining Entrepreneurship in a Post-Pandemic Context

Álvaro Dias <sup>1,\*</sup> and Mafalda Patuleia <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ISCTE, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa and BRU-Iscte—Business Research Unit (IBS), Av. das Forças Armadas, 1649-026 Lisbon, Portugal

<sup>2</sup> Lusófona University and GOVCOPP—Research Unit on Governance, Competitiveness and Public Policies, Aveiro University, 3810-193 Aveiro, Portugal

\* Correspondence: alvaro.dias@iscte-iul.pt

More than three years have passed since the first lockdown, and the world is not the same. The new context that emerged from the pandemic is now influenced by conflicts, inflation, social conflicts, and the omnipresent issue of global warming. All these (and more) led consumers, companies, and governments to rethink their behavior. Several studies have focused on the behavior of these stakeholders in the post-pandemic context; however, studies focused on the development of entrepreneurial skills in a post-pandemic context have been scarce. At the same time, there is a growing number of voices calling for the need to adopt business models based on a circular economy (Dias et al. 2022). Again, at this level, research exploring the link between entrepreneurship and the development of business models for a circular economy is limited.

The study of these areas is particularly relevant since the market patterns are shifting; namely, consumers and tourists are acting and deciding based on different assumptions, a trend demanding adequate and timely responses both from firm decision-makers and government policymakers (Dias et al. 2021). It was in this context that the special issue “(Re)defining Entrepreneurship in a Post-Pandemic Context” was created within the scope of the social sciences in order to promote the research and academic cross-sectorial discussion of the key factors related to entrepreneurial resilience, post-pandemic recovery responses, and the transition to more sustainable business models. Accordingly, they aimed to: (i) study the development of more resilient and sustainable entrepreneurial business models; (ii) identify the strategies to revitalize entrepreneurship and SMEs in a post-pandemic, including firm strategy, local development strategy, and policymaking, among others.

A total of 11 teams of researchers responded to this challenge in a cross-sectionally and multi-country compendium of chapters. From Latin America to Asia, studies as specific as canyoning experiences and policymaking were presented in this Special Issue. The discussion about resilience, sustainability, and entrepreneurship was discussed from several enriching perspectives, as discussed ahead.

In their article, Acevedo et al. (2023) studied a sample of Colombian firms to determine the importance of information and communication technologies, as well as adaptability capabilities, on their survival in the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic. As they found, adaptability is revealed to be an important capability for start-ups to obtain government aid, and firms’ resilience in these crisis moments is associated with important organizational capabilities such as innovation, learning, maturity of the value proposition, and flexibility of the business model.

While Acevedo and colleagues analyzed the critical success factors in several sectors, other chapters of this book focused on specific sectors. For example, Mourato et al. (2023) studied digital nomads and how their sustainable responsibility influenced two types of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (social- and business-related). This study pioneered by analyzing the role of these workers in local communities, showing that social and environmental



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concerns do not influence outcomes equally, since their influence is stronger on social self-efficacy and lower on self-efficacy.

[Suminah et al. \(2023\)](#) also studied a specific sector, more specifically agriculture in Surakarta, Indonesia. Their focus was on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on agricultural micro, small, and medium-sized firms. Suminah and colleagues explored the influence of empowerment on several organizational dimensions and found a positive effect on economic capital and on the ability of agricultural business actors. However, the effects of empowerment on human capital, perception, and financial capital were not supported by the results. They found that the ability of business actors was influenced by economic capital and the perceptions of business actors but was not affected by human and financial capital.

The work from [Magalhães et al. \(2022\)](#) analyzed the change in the skills of hospitality workers during the pandemic. During that period, workers worked remotely, which posed several challenges that they were not used to. They found that these workers became more confident in their skills while simultaneously becoming more aware of the need for more training and skill development. Workers recognize the importance of developing soft skills (e.g., teamwork) as well as task-related skills (e.g., linguistics and digital literacy).

The resilience of firms offering canyoning in the Azores was studied by [Silva et al. \(2022\)](#). They found that these firms adapted to new demand characteristics and changed their business model in order to survive during the pandemic. These firms took advantage of Azores' attractiveness during this period to accelerate some of the transitions and undertake changes in their business model. The firms responded to health and safety issues by adapting their procedures to the specificity of canyoning activities, such as reducing group sizes and limiting accommodation-activity location transfers, allowing them to reduce costs and improve managerial processes.

[O'Neill et al. \(2022\)](#) analyzed another water-related activity, in this case, surfing. More specifically, they studied the social and environmental goals pursued by lifestyle entrepreneurs in Ericeira, Portugal. These entrepreneurs, according to the literature, are associated with more sustainable entrepreneurial behavior when compared with larger firms, but little empirical evidence was found. As such, the authors showed that these entrepreneurs combine financial and non-financial goals in running their businesses.

In the same vein as the study by Mourato and colleagues, [Broccia et al. \(2022\)](#) also study the factors influencing social self-efficacy and self-efficacy. Instead of the previous study, Broccia and colleagues' sample was composed of firms from multiple sectors. More specifically, this research studied the direct and indirect effects of innovativeness on social self-efficacy and self-efficacy and showed that self-efficacy was directly influenced by innovativeness. However, the effect of social self-efficacy was only significant through the mediating effect of philanthropic CSR and organizational capabilities.

The strongly negative effect of the pandemic in Can Tho, Vietnam was explored by [Huynh et al. \(2022\)](#). They highlight the importance of the local authorities in terms of developing supportive policies for both firms and workers to become more resilient and competitive. Local authorities must also establish the link between the local context and the central government that leads to effective governance. More specifically, local authorities can establish the framework for policymaking and crisis mitigation procedures such as energy cost reduction, capital support, and tax support, among others.

[Albornoz-Arias and Santafé-Rojas \(2022\)](#) studied a sample of Venezuelan migrant entrepreneurs operating in Colombia, more specifically their degree of self-confidence. They found that the factors associated with high self-confidence are gender, perception of ability to take advantage of opportunities, perception of demanding efficiency and quality, and perception of taking risks. Following the same concerns about policymaking as in the previous chapter, the authors recommend the implementation of policies by the Colombian government related to education and the formalization of the labor market, with a particular concern for gender issues.

The barriers to innovation of Ecuadorian firms were studied by [Carvache-Franco et al. \(2022\)](#). They identified several barriers to product and process innovation, such as a lack of company funds, high costs of innovation, and a lack of qualified personnel. They found it to be a problem both from the firms' and the country's perspectives. Additional barriers to product innovation were also identified by the authors, such as the lack of market information, as well as to process innovation, such as the lack of financing from external sources, the lack of technological information, and market dominance by large firms.

Finally, [Cruz et al. \(2022\)](#) explored drive tourism not only from the economic sustainability and environmental sustainability perspectives but especially from the social sustainability perspective. By adopting a systematic literature review procedure, the authors highlight important elements when developing a drive-to tourism route, such as the implementation of a collective decision-making process by involving local communities and other tourism stakeholders, as well as the promotion of the destination in terms of strategic policies.

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