



RUTGERS

Institute for Corporate
Social Innovation



Seminars to Advance Cumulative Knowledge

***From necessity to opportunity:
Scaling bricolage across resource-constrained environments***

Christian Busch and Harry Barkema

Forthcoming at *Strategic Management Journal*

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Overview

- Moderator: **Mike Barnett**
- Presenting author: **Christian Busch**
- Depth discussant: **Ted Baker**
- Breadth discussant: **Sophie Bacq**
- Impact discussant: **Bibi Gonzalez**
- Q&A

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Christian Busch

Presenting Author

Clinical Assistant Professor
Center for Global Affairs
New York University

Question 1

What problem or issue does this paper address?

Answer 1

How do enterprises scale up in resource-constrained environments using bricolage?

Question 2

What have prior studies overlooked about this problem or issue?

Answer 2

Bricolage has been assumed to be idiosyncratic and so not useful for scaling up.

Question 3

What is the paper's focal research question?

Answer 3

How and why can bricolage be scaled?

Question 4

What is the paper's primary answer to this focal research question?

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Answer 4

Bricolage can be scaled via particular heuristics that promote organizational learning and effectiveness.

Question 5

Why is the paper's methodology appropriate for answering the focal research question?

Answer 5

Our inductive case study provided the granularity needed to understand the underlying dynamics and compare them across units.

Question 6

What concerns did reviewers/editor raise about the paper's methodology?

Answer 6

Reviewers worried that our “extreme case” would not be generalizable.

Question 7

Why is your empirical setting appropriate for answering the focal research question?

Answer 7

Our extreme case is a strong test of scaling under resource constraints; what holds here will hold more strongly in less extreme settings.

Question 8

What concerns did reviewers/editor raise about the paper's empirical setting?

Answer 8

A social enterprise operating in sub-Saharan Africa raised questions of transferability and boundary conditions that we had to address.

Question 9

What does this paper leave unanswered about its focal research question?

Answer 9

How these mechanisms may differ in commercial or larger organizations and any hidden costs of scaling bricolage.

Question 10

What would you do differently if you started the paper over again?

Answer 10

Focus clearly on either its theoretical contribution or unique empirical setting from the start.



Ted Baker

Depth Discussant

George F. Farris Chair in
Entrepreneurship
Rutgers University

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Question 1

What theories or phenomenon does this paper most directly inform?

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Answer 1

Entrepreneurial bricolage and entrepreneurial resourcefulness more generally, strategies of simple rules, organizational learning, scaling of social ventures.

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Question 2

How specifically does this paper advance understanding of these theories or phenomena?

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Answer 2

It carefully combines bricolage and heuristics to develop novel theory that challenges presumed limitations to growth (scaling) through bricolage.

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Question 3

What other studies are most consistent with this paper's findings?

Answer 3

Reypens et al., JBV, 2021; Kim & Kim, AMJ, forthcoming; some new work coming out of Australia that challenge tired orthodoxies such as bifurcating resource-seeking versus bricolage and bifurcating parallel versus selective bricolage.

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Question 4

What other studies cause you to question the paper's findings?

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Answer 4

None.

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Question 5

What is the best way to validate this paper's findings?

D
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Answer 5

Its careful inductive methodology already validates it, but qualitative work could challenge findings or develop hypotheses for quantitative testing.

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Question 6

What relevant mechanisms remain unknown about this paper's theories or phenomena?

Answer 6

The local contextualization process remains something of a black box.

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Question 7

How would you refine the research question to study these unknown mechanisms?

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Answer 7

When bricolage is scaled through a strategy of sharing simple rules and heuristics, how does local contextualization work?

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Question 8

What empirical settings would be most useful to study these unknown mechanisms?

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Answer 8

Those where bricolage is scaled through a strategy of sharing simple rules and heuristics, especially those where both (more or less) successful and failed efforts could be observed.

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Question 9

What methods would be most useful to study these unknown mechanisms?

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Answer 9

Exploratory methods, and especially qualitative methods since it's hard to pre-validate a measure of something nobody has yet discovered.

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Question 10

What difficulties will scholars face in further advancing this area of study?

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Answer 10

Tenure and promotion clocks enforced by committees who haven't a clue about how long good qualitative work takes or how to value it.

Sophie Bacq

Breadth Discussant

Associate Professor
Indiana University



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Question 1

What theories or phenomena in your discipline does this paper most directly inform?

Answer 1

Entrepreneurial bricolage, venture growth, and social entrepreneurship and impact scaling.

Question 2

How specifically does this paper advance understanding of these theories or phenomena?

Answer 2

It shows how to alleviate the paradox between growth and bricolage, and provides empirical evidence of replication.

Question 3

What other studies in your discipline are most consistent with this paper's findings?

Answer 3

Reypens et al. (2021) is consistent but looks at entrepreneurial bricolage in combination with other resourcing approaches. Desa & Basu also link entrepreneurial bricolage to social impact.

Question 4

What other studies in your discipline cause you to question this paper's findings?

Answer 4

None, actually. It rather reinforces the need to go beyond the assumption that bricolage precedes other resourcing strategies.

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Question 5

What is the best way to validate this paper's findings?

Answer 5

Test in another context, another penurious environment, or even a resource-rich environment, which would help delineate the boundary conditions.

Question 6

What relevant mechanisms remain unknown about this paper's theories or phenomena?

Answer 6

Contextualizing, when it comes to the characteristics of local partners and the extent these partners engage with the communities that use the services.

Question 7

How would you refine the research question to study these unknown mechanisms?

Answer 7

I would pose the question in terms of organizational scaling: “Can organizations scale through bricolage, and if so, how and why? The answer could involve the concept of “bricolage scaling”—the process of organizational growing by transferring bricolage heuristics to other contexts.

Question 8

What empirical settings would be most useful to study these unknown mechanisms?

Answer 8

Settings that combine resource scarcity and an impact orientation. As the authors write (p. 767), social enterprises “typically face localized, complex social issues.” Therefore, they are the more suited setting for further exploration of bricolage heuristics transfer and perennity.

Question 9

What methods would be most useful to study these unknown mechanisms?

Answer 9

A qualitative inductive study would be most useful to study these mechanisms of contextualization.

Question 10

What difficulties will scholars face in further advancing this area of study?

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Answer 10

(1) the subjective aspect of resource scarcity in a globalized world, especially surrounding impact issues;
(2) the challenge of coding bricolage appropriately and with precision.

Bibi Gonzalez

Impact Discussant

Founder & Director

Come Mejor Wa'ik / Eat
Better



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Question 1

What practical problem or issue does this paper most directly address?

Answer 1

It challenges traditional perception of ways to scale a social venture.

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Question 2

How does this paper help managers understand how to address this problem or issue?

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Answer 2

Managers feel identified, seeing that not all needs to be perfect or have immense funding, but you can start & grow with what you have.

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Question 3

Are any parts of the paper unnecessarily confusing or jargony?

Answer 3

Bricolage in French means something completely different; needed a cheat sheet for heuristics to remind me; but both terms were very insightful to learn.

Question 4

In what ways are the findings consistent with what happens in practice?

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Answer 4

It's exactly right & what we're doing here; it makes me think at what point should I do something riskier to achieve my goals.

Question 5

In what ways are the findings not consistent with what happens in practice?

Answer 5

Perhaps the expansion to different hubs; countries differ in history, culture, trust, etc., plus external factors like war, gangs, etc. are out of your control.

Question 6

What specifically does this paper overlook about the realities of this problem or issue?

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Answer 6

The difference between a venture that is growing with bricolage & heuristics & one that is not – where do they meet? When to focus solely on bricolage heuristics vs. a more thought through plan?

Question 7

How would you revise the research question to make the study more practical?

Answer 7

What do managers call their growing “practice” or “strategy”, and when do they mix bricolage in planning ahead with limited resources with improvising, what happens when they meet their goal, will they still be doing that or another way?

Question 8

What other empirical setting would allow a more realistic assessment of this problem or issue?

Answer 8

If it varies with countries, socio-economic and historic baggage? For example, this was done in a post-Apartheid zone, somewhat forgotten or stereotyped place, when getting through and above is done out of necessity; is this applicable in higher-income countries with less marginalized groups, or even in those countries with communities that have been ethnically excluded?

Question 9

What other papers or books have helped you to understand this problem or issue?

Answer 9

Poor economics: a radical rethinking of the way to fight global poverty - *E. Duflo, A. Banerjee (especially the part of entrepreneurs by default).*

The Serendipity Mindset - *C. Busch.*

And plenty of Accelerator programs, bootcamps, fellowships, conferences, and community experience on-site.

Question 10

What related issues do you think would benefit from further academic study?

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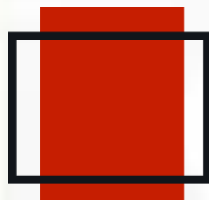
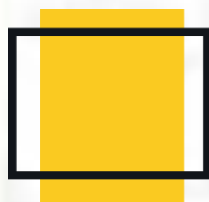
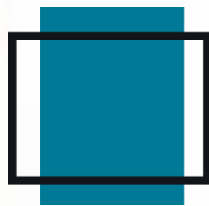
Answer 10

Seek to really understand the value of the community, their history, perception, learnings, and being open to collaborating jointly in solutions with other partners, and how innovation can be within all walks of life.

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Questions from audience

Discussant follow-ups