



Reproducing gender. The spatial context of gender in entrepreneurship

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Abstract

This thesis aims to contextualise gender-in-entrepreneurship, which means focusing on when, how, and why entrepreneurship happens. Gender-in-entrepreneurship implies a focus on how women and men perform gender in entrepreneurship while questioning underlying masculine assumptions of entrepreneurship. By combining the two ideas, this thesis adds to our understanding of how the gender process intertwines with entrepreneurship and takes place in a spatial context.

I have performed ethnographic fieldwork (including interviews, observations and staying up to date on social media) with over 70 informants who were men and women entrepreneurs, municipal politicians, and officials, all in a small rural municipality in Sweden with about 6000 residents. The municipality is attempting to rebrand itself from industrial to entrepreneurial.

This compilation thesis is based on four papers. Together, these papers provide a range of insights into gender-in-entrepreneurship when considering a spatial perspective. Relating the four papers to the overall aim, I illuminate two points:

I demonstrate that the spatial context is intertwined with gender-in-entrepreneurship through showing how entrepreneurship in context reproduces gender, and how the gendering of spatial context shapes entrepreneurship.

I also demonstrate what the spatial context comprises, through developing the dimensions of the history of the spatial context, the distance to other spatial contexts, and the closeness within the spatial context. These dimensions are situation and place specific; they are dictated by the spatial context. Through contextualisation, researchers can see these dimensions and thus see that it is through their interactions that gender-in-entrepreneurship unfolds.

Keywords: Context, Entrepreneurship, Ethnography, Gender, Sweden

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