

Entrepreneurship, complexity and the emergent order in the techno-economic scenario of the twenty-first century. Evidence from a field study in Tuscany

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Summary of the paper

This paper analyses entrepreneurship adopting the concept of 'emergence', defined in the literature on entrepreneurship and complexity, as the creation of a new order, arising from the interactions between its elements. We hypothesise that the recent evolution of (and interaction between) i) entrepreneurial figures and their functions, (ii) firms' structures and strategies and (iii) external environment has defined a set of properties, characteristic of a new emergent entrepreneurial order. A case study conducted on 24 entrepreneurs based on a traditional manufacturing region is used to support the theoretical building process and demonstrate the phenomenon beyond the Silicon Valley storytelling. The results categorise the entrepreneurial properties around three spheres (Cognition, Coordination, Cooperation) and explain (in the discussion part) their dynamic generative process, underlining the necessity to embrace a holistic unit of analysis, to fully understand the entrepreneurial emergent order. Finally, some implications for managerial models and policy strategies are proposed.

Beyond these aspects, the originality of the paper is due to two- higher order issues:

- (i) the paper goes in the direction to integrate economics and management approaches and theoretical frameworks. This is particularly relevant because studying complexity is a multidisciplinary effort that requires the combination of theories and methods even apparently distant (e.g. the recent rise of "econphysics")
- (ii) the paper wants to build a theoretical framework updated to the new entrepreneurial context and useful as a departure point to operationalise variables to test in quantitative studies. Humanity is in the middle of a big transition (considering Covid-19, Environmental issues and digital transformation) and so the actors that create economic value. Therefore, the definition of a conceptual map is a first, but fundamental step, in order to properly update empirical models and strategically combine official statistics with new sources of unstructured data.