



GORDON INSTITUTE  
OF BUSINESS SCIENCE

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# **Venture creation: building theory from South African case studies**

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## Abstract

In developing South Africa, a complex web of interacting historical, economic, organisational, social and personal factors influences entrepreneurial endeavour. Such phenomena cannot easily be explained by *a priori* theories largely based on data from the Western developed world rather than the developing world.

The purpose of the study was to develop a mid-range theory of venture creation in a developing country, based on an in-depth understanding of the experiences of a sample of South African opportunity entrepreneurs.

A multiple case-study design was selected. The research was delimited by focusing on entrepreneurs in South Africa currently or recently engaged in venture creation for opportunity-based, rather than survivalist, enterprises. A series of thick narrative descriptions of individual entrepreneurs engaged in the start-up process was prepared. This was followed by within-case and cross-case analysis and comparison with the literature. Data analysis was conducted in the tradition of grounded theory, which is only rarely seen in the entrepreneurship literature.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study is an enhanced perspective of the venture creation process and its sub-processes. The model synthesises the efforts of other scholars, incorporates the lived experience of entrepreneurs in this study, adds new components to conventional models of new venture creation, and reconsiders the ordering of events in the process.

## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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