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PERSPECTIVES ON ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTION: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE[1]

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to conduct a scoping review of the literature on entrepreneurial action available on the Web of Science data platform. To this end, a methodological procedure inspired by the Main Items for Reporting Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol was used. In this way, 652 works were initially found. However, after these studies were screened based on preestablished criteria, only 24 articles were included in the final sample and identified as relevant to the proposed objectives. The results of this review revealed that entrepreneurial action has been explored from different perspectives and highlighted seven categories of analysis: "Exploitation of Opportunities", "Institutional Logics", "Entrepreneurial Behavior", "Uncertainty", "Value Creation", "Competitive Advantage" and "Entrepreneurial Process". In addition, few reviews have investigated entrepreneurial action because most studies have focused instead on entrepreneurship or its interactions with other contexts. The categories of analysis revealed by this review can enhance our understanding of how relevant authors have contextualized entrepreneurial action. To provide suggestions for future studies, a research agenda was developed for each proposed category.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Action; Entrepreneurial Process; Entrepreneurship; Scoping Review; Web of Science.

Resumo

Objetivou-se realizar uma revisão de escopo da literatura sobre a ação empreendedora na plataforma de dados Web of Science. Para tanto, foi utilizado um procedimento metodológico inspirado no protocolo Principais Itens para Relatar Revisões Sistemáticas e Meta-Análises (PRISMA). Desse modo, foram encontrados a princípio, 652 trabalhos. Contudo, considerando os critérios pré-estabelecidos, foram incluídos na amostra final apenas 24 artigos, os quais permitiram atender aos objetivos propostos. Nos resultados, foi apresentada a compreensão da ação empreendedora, por meio de diferentes perspectivas, de modo que foram criadas sete categorias de análise, a saber: "Exploração de Oportunidades", "Lógicas Institucionais", "Comportamento Empreendedor", "Incerteza", "Criação de Valor", "Vantagem Competitiva" e "Processo Empreendedor". Conclui-se que há poucas revisões voltadas para a ação empreendedora, pois, a maior parte dos estudos está direcionada para o empreendedorismo ou para a interseção dele com outros contextos. Constata-se que as categorias de análise facilitaram a compreensão de como os autores contextualizaram a ação empreendedora. Como sugestão de estudos futuros, foi elaborada uma agenda de pesquisa para cada categoria proposta.

Palavras-chave: Ação Empreendedora; Empreendedorismo; Processo Empreendedor; Revisão de Escopo; Web of Science.

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INTRODUCTION

The theme of this research is centered on entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on the concept of entrepreneurial action that fosters new knowledge in this multifaceted field, characterized by its diversity of definitions. From this perspective, entrepreneurial action involves the activities of the entrepreneur who is "being entrepreneurial" at the moment of the action's development. The focus is on collective work and the commitment of the entrepreneur and their collaborators, which will impact the results achieved.

Understanding entrepreneurship, particularly by encouraging the pursuit of new research on the subject, is crucial. The scoping review provides relevant information for researchers in the field of entrepreneurship, assisting in the development of new studies across various areas and generating insights for these professionals. Additionally, within the analyzed studies, a research agenda will be presented for each proposed category of analysis, highlighting the gaps that still need to be addressed. Another significant contribution is the analysis of the concepts of entrepreneurial action, allowing for an examination of whether these are solely profit-oriented or encompass other perspectives. The research can also contribute to the formulation of public policies aimed at diverse contexts by disseminating scientific information that can be appropriated by society.

The gap in this work relates to the scarcity of academic studies focused on entrepreneurial action, particularly in Brazil, and specifically studies that address the conceptualization of entrepreneurial action. In an effort to fill this gap, the present research seeks to answer the following question: How has entrepreneurial action been discussed in scientific publications on the Web of Science platform? Therefore, this work aims to conduct a scoping review of the literature on entrepreneurial action using the Web of Science database. Specifically, it intends to analyze journal data, examine the methodological classification of the selected articles, and investigate the articles that addressed the concept of entrepreneurial action to understand the central elements that comprise each one.

Methodologically, a scoping review of the literature was conducted using the Web of Science database. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 24 articles addressing the conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action were included, thus providing greater support for this study. To this end, a methodological procedure inspired by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol was used. The data for this study were collected in October 2022. Seven categories of analysis were created based on the reading of the articles, with the purpose of analyzing, organizing, and grouping these documents, namely: "Exploitation of

Opportunities", "Institutional Logics", "Entrepreneurial Behavior", "Uncertainty", "Value Creation", "Competitive Advantage" and "Entrepreneurial Process".

This research is structured as follows: first, the introduction is presented to contextualize the theme of the study. Subsequently, the perspectives on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial action are discussed. Next, the methodological approach used, along with the steps developed to meet the proposed objectives, is outlined. Following this, the results and discussion of the study are presented, based on the analyzed data. Finally, the concluding remarks are provided, suggesting future research agendas and recommendations for further studies in the area.

PERSPECTIVES ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTION

Discussions about entrepreneurship emerged around 200 years ago, and over the years, various conceptions of the terminology have been developed, encompassing divergent fields of study, both within academia and outside the educational environment (CASSANO *et al.,* 2021). Thus, Cassano *et al.* (2021) emphasize that entrepreneurship has been analyzed through economics, being essential for economic development (SCHUMPETER, 1934), and through psychology, with behaviorist studies aimed at understanding personal characteristics and achievements (MC CLELLAND, 1987; MAZIRIRI *et al.,* 2024), among other possibilities.

The current conceptualization of entrepreneurship is linked to the art of performing something new, encompassing motivation and creativity. Entrepreneurial behavior is related to the execution of an organizational or personal project, developed cooperatively and innovatively by the involved members, amidst the constant challenge of opportunities and risks present in the process, where entrepreneurs adopt a proactive behavior towards the issues that need to be resolved (BAGGIO; BAGGIO, 2014).

Entrepreneurship can be defined as a global phenomenon that drives the economy and is responsible for transforming commercial reality and promoting social development by encouraging productive activities, innovations and the modernization of processes that need improvement (CUNHA *et al*., 2011).

Another conception of entrepreneurship pertains to practices that focus on the principles of creation and innovation, which may be associated with the transformations that occur in society, which are in turn correlated with the ideas and behaviors that individuals develop when they try new ways of doing things and recognize opportunities that other people cannot see (BERLIM *et al*., 2006). Furthermore, Silveira *et al*. (2007) emphasizes that the concept of entrepreneurship is still very

subjective, as people know the expression, but cannot define it, and this lack of understanding can be considered the reason for the existence of different conceptions of the term.

Entrepreneurship is substantial for job creation and economic growth (HUANG *et al.,* 2024). Many researchers are focusing on the behavior of the entrepreneur (CAPUTO; PELLEGRINI, 2020; LI *et al.,* 2023), the individual who accepts risks, faces the possibility of failure, is distinctive, motivated, and passionate about what they do, and must know how to seize opportunities, creating a venture from which they assume calculated risks (SENTANIN; BARBOZA, 2005; CORDERO, 2023; YANG *et al.,* 2024; DIMOV; GÜNESTEPE, 2024). Moreover, entrepreneurs encounter considerable challenges in an uncertain environment marked by rapid changes and even a lack of resources and information (BAUM; LOCKE, 2004; BOTHA; PIETERSEN, 2022).

Entrepreneurship can also be understood through the experiences of entrepreneurial actors who frequently attempt to develop successful business ventures (RINDOVA *et al.,* 2009; THORGREN; WILLIAMS, 2023). The field of entrepreneurship lacks a well-defined conceptual structure, making it a multifaceted term. Consequently, many researchers have focused on the entrepreneur as the sole individual responsible for entrepreneurial endeavors, leading to an increase in research on entrepreneurship at the expense of entrepreneurial actions (DIMOV; PISTRUI, 2020; LACERDA; ANDRADE, 2021; ÁVILA *et al.,* 2023).

However, in the 1980s, studies on entrepreneurship advanced and moved beyond individual entrepreneurial characteristics (GRÉGOIRE *et al.,* 2006). Consequently, research that portrayed the entrepreneur as the sole individual responsible for entrepreneurship development raised questions and faced various criticisms (GOMES *et al.,* 2013). In this scenario, Paiva Júnior (2004) highlights that the entrepreneurial individual performs their activities collectively, with the assistance of others peoples. Therefore, entrepreneurship has come to be analyzed from the perspective of entrepreneurial action. Wood *et al.* (2021) understand entrepreneurial action as an intentional activity by individuals, where entrepreneurs seek to introduce something innovative into the world. In academic research, entrepreneurial action is focused on its development in uncertain situations, with entrepreneurs formulating business plans with the assistance of other collaborators, aiming to create mechanisms for interaction (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006; ALVAREZ; BARNEY, 2007; WOOD *et al.,* 2021).

Entrepreneurial action plays a fundamental role in entrepreneurship, as entrepreneurs operating in uncertain environments must transform unknown aspects into familiar ones (KNIGHT, 1921; HUNT *et al.,* 2022), through actions that address the entrepreneurial environment (KIRZNER, 1997; HUNT *et al.,* 2022). The literature on entrepreneurial action seeks to elucidate the attitudes, behaviors, experiments, motivations, and activities that entrepreneurs engage in within uncertain settings

(BURNELL *et al.,* 2023; CHEN *et al.,* 2024; STEVENSON *et al.,* 2024). In this sense, the concept of entrepreneurial action can be analyzed as a response to a judgment decision under conditions of uncertainty, concerning a potential profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006; YANG *et al.,* 2024).

McMullen and Shepherd (2006) also conducted a study on entrepreneurial action where it can be understood through two stages related to opportunity: attention and evaluation. Thus, attention is associated with identifying opportunities in a general, broader sense, while evaluation pertains to the discovery of a specific opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006). From this perspective, Barbosa and Smith's study (2024) focused on opportunity evaluation, where the entrepreneurial individual navigates this stage in an environment characterized by uncertainty.

In light of this, they developed an interpretation of entrepreneurial action knowledge aiming to highlight that this form of action is supported by the information entrepreneurs possess, often shaped by their beliefs and cognitive processes. In this regard, Brundin and Gustafsson (2013) and Mensah *et al.* (2021) emphasize that entrepreneurs' emotions play a crucial role in their decision-making processes, whether in approving or rejecting an investment under conditions of uncertainty. Thus, feelings such as hope and confidence are essential elements for these individuals' investment decisions in risky situations. Conversely, embarrassment and frustration discourage entrepreneurs in decision-making contexts.

The authors Gomes *et al.* (2013) emphasize that in research focused on entrepreneurial action, the focus shifts away from the individual and towards the achieved action, where there is no specific individual responsible for its development, but rather a collaboration among actors. Within this scope, studies related to entrepreneurial action are significant for recognizing collaborative work. Currently, it is important to discuss this topic as it gains prominence in global debates.

In this sense, entrepreneurial action involves creating something new, in which context an opportunity that is visualized is developed based on the principles of persistence and dedication on the part of the entrepreneur; the purpose of this process is to achieve results and identify the risks that must be calculated (OLIVEIRA, 2012). For Kurakto *et al*. (2005), entrepreneurial action is the result of the entrepreneur's behavioral action that can result at the individual level in promotion, new assignments and financial rewards, while the organizational level enables the emergence of a culture entrepreneurial organization, reestablishing competitive advantage and improving reputation among shareholders. In the view of Oyson and Whittaker (2015), entrepreneurial action consists of a way of creating entrepreneurial opportunities, as it is during entrepreneurial action that the individual intertwines with their environment and develops their cognition.

Entrepreneurial action constitutes an important tool for entrepreneurship, directly impacting its outcomes by facilitating the discovery, exploitation, and monitoring of opportunities (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006; FRESE; GIELNIK, 2023; THORGREN; WILLIAMS, 2023). In this sense, studies involving entrepreneurial action presume that it fosters progress in the creation and maintenance of new ventures (MC MULLEN *et al.,* 2021; DAVIDSSON *et al.,* 2021; THORGREN; WILLIAMS, 2023).

According to Wood *et al.* (2021) and Göttel *et al.* (2024), entrepreneurial action constitutes a human activity focused on the intentional behavior of the entrepreneur in creating something new, which aligns with Schumpeter's studies (1934). Furthermore, Wood *et al.* (2021) also echo the thoughts of Sarasvathy (2001), where entrepreneurial action is characterized by actions undertaken amidst uncertainty, as entrepreneurs interact with other actors to plan their goals and objectives.

Afeltowicz (2024) in agreement with Aldrich (2005), suggests that entrepreneurial action can be understood as an action undertaken by social actors with the aim of creating value production, involving aspects such as individual interests, technological resources, entrepreneurs (actors), organizational mechanisms, among others.

According to Chen *et al.* (2018) and Ripollés and Blesa (2024), entrepreneurial actions can also be undertaken by students, transitioning from abstract to concrete manifestations. Abstract actions encompass goals shaped by these individuals' thoughts, aiming to become entrepreneurs or develop innovative ideas. Concrete entrepreneurial action, on the other hand, involves putting ideas into practice, such as drafting a business plan, creating a product or service, negotiating, presenting ideas, among other activities.

Among the studies that have focused on entrepreneurial action in Brazil, four in particular can be highlighted. An article entitled “Entrepreneurial action in the public sector: The ‘postpurchase’ sector of a public university of Minas Gerais”, which was produced by Lacerda and Andrade (2021), consisted of investigating whether the creation of the “post-purchase” sector in a public university in the south of Minas Gerais can be understood as an entrepreneurial action. The results showed that the implementation of the postpurchase sector can be viewed as an entrepreneurial action that contributed to social results for the university.

In “Entrepreneurial action under a bibliometric perspective”, Avila *et al*. (2021) explored the scientific field of entrepreneurial action, identifying the main conceptual structures that have been developed in this context internationally. It was found that there is a lack of studies regarding entrepreneurial action, which requires the development of more theoretical and practical research to consolidate the topic.

The study “Entrepreneurial action in public school management”, which was conducted by Nascimento and Andrade (2022), identified the actions taken by public actors in the municipal education department of a municipality located in southern Minas Gerais to comply with the National Education Plan (PNE). The results revealed four novel entrepreneurial actions aimed at the school community and society that met 3 standards stipulated by the new PNE.

Finally, the article “Entrepreneurial action in the public sector: an analysis of family-school interaction in public educational institutions”, which was produced by Silva *et al*. (2022), analyzed research on the practice of Family-School Interaction, as a public action developed in educational institutions in a municipality in the south of Minas Gerais. The empirical research reported in that article revealed that family-school interaction is an entrepreneurial action that promotes collectivity, is innovative, prioritizes results and, most notably, helps families approach the school environment more closely.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, a scoping review of the literature was used. According to Arksey and O’Malley (2005), this review format seeks to present the complete themes, in which different study formats can be used. In the scoping review, there is a lower probability of addressing specific research topics and its purpose is to monitor the quality of the studies that were chosen.

Regarding the method, a theoretical-deductive approach was employed from a rationalistic perspective, utilizing previously published articles that contributed to formulating a proposal for understanding entrepreneurial action. For data collection procedures in this review, inspiration was drawn from the PRISMA protocol (MOHER *et al.,* 2009; CARDINS *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, it was observed that most of the 27-item checklist was followed in this study. Additionally, the five stages proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), significant authors in the field of scoping reviews, were also adhered to. Furthermore, consistent with the PRISMA protocol (MOHER *et al.,* 2009), a flowchart outlining the article selection process was developed based on the protocol. Finally, the inclusion of studies was conducted in stages (Chart 1), aiming to ensure greater methodological rigor for the research.

From this perspective, the theme of the present study was initially identified; this theme focuses on the conceptualization of entrepreneurial action. Thus, all studies that addressed entrepreneurial action were surveyed. For this purpose, the *Web of Science* database was chosen as the data source for this

study because of its importance both nationally and internationally, because it collects many scientific publications and because it is a relevant study tool.

Chart 1 - Stages of the scoping review proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005)

Identification of the research topic	Scope review starting point. It helps guide how research strategies will be developed.
Identification of relevant studies	The field of the scoping review should be as comprehensive as possible to facilitate the identification of primary studies and appropriate reviews that can help answer the central research question.
Selection of studies	The scoping review includes *post hoc* inclusion and exclusion criteria that help facilitate the choice of studies relevant to the study.
Data mapping	This stage facilitates the interpretation and synthesis of useful data for the study and the investigation of relevant parameters and gaps in the literature.
Grouping, summary and reporting of results	This stage presents an overview of all the material included in the review.

Source: Self elaboration. Based on Arksey (2005, p. 8).

A search was conducted in the advanced search field of the *Web of Science* database. The search term (*entrepreneur*_action* *) was used as the topic, the time for the search included all years, and the indices consisted of the following: SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, A&HCI, CPCI-S, CPCI-SSH, and ESCI. Thus, all the documents that emerged from this search were investigated. The data used in this study were collected in October 2022.

The results include the impact factors of the included journals and the number of citations of the selected articles, which were extracted from the international data platform *Web of Science*. In addition, the *Qualis* classifications available from the Brazilian data platform Sucupira are emphasized in the fields of public and business administration, accounting and tourism.

The inclusion criteria for this study focused on 1) studies that were identified as articles in the *Web of Science* database; 2) articles that included the expression “entrepreneurial action” in the title, abstract or body of the text; and 3) articles that presented possible conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action. The exclusion criteria for this study focused on 1) studies that were not classified as articles in the *Web of Science* database; 2) articles that did not include the expression “entrepreneurial action” in the title, abstract or body of the text; and 3) articles that merely cited the expression “entrepreneurial action” without defining it.

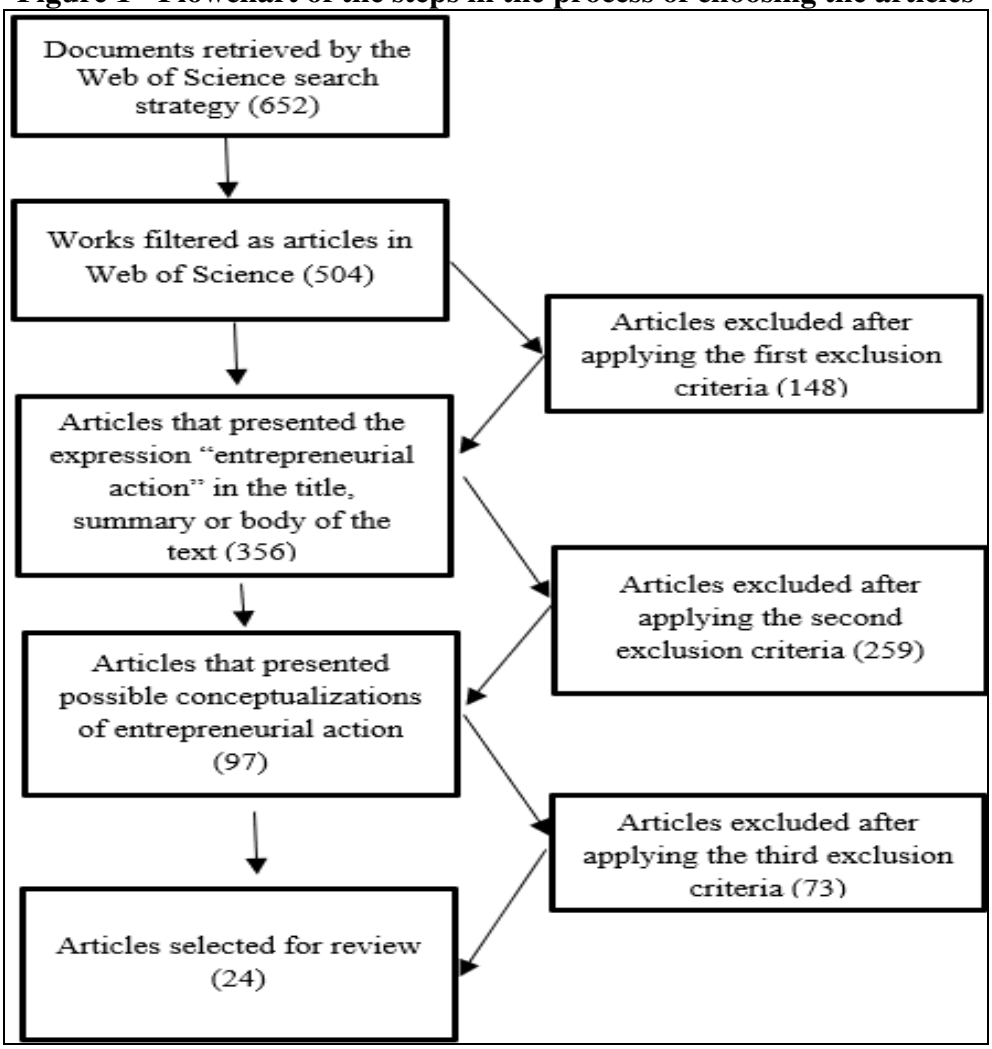
The process of identifying and selecting relevant studies involved in three stages. In the first stage of the research, 652 studies that pertained to the topic of entrepreneurial action were found by searching the *Web of Science* database. The second stage consisted of a more careful phase, in which the second exclusion criterion was applied. After selecting studies that emphasized the conceptualization of entrepreneurial action and applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria chosen for this study, 97 articles were selected. Finally, with an in-depth reading of these works and after applying the third exclusion

criterion, it was observed that 24 articles addressed the concepts of entrepreneurial action, thus providing greater theoretical support for this study, which were included.

In the third stage, the selected studies were analyzed using content analysis (BARDIN, 2011). According to Moraes (1999), this analytical approach can be used to explain and interpret all the content that is present in texts and documents. Thus, in this study, 7 categories of analysis were defined, which were created after reading the 24 articles included in this study; these categories are presented in more depth in the results. These categories were created with the purpose of grouping and organizing these documents and were as follows: "Exploitation of Opportunities", "Institutional Logics", "Entrepreneurial Behavior", "Uncertainty", "Value Creation", "Competitive Advantage", and " Entrepreneurial Process".

In the final stages of the scoping review, the data were mapped using a flowchart (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Flowchart of the steps in the process of choosing the articles



Source: Self elaboration.

Collating data, summarizing key results, and reporting detailed results are essential parts of the data analysis and interpretation process. These steps provide a more complete and in-depth

understanding of the patterns and discoveries obtained, contributing to the advancement of knowledge about entrepreneurial action and will be presented below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis of the journals, including the journals' names, which can help us understand the way in which they were classified based on different parameters; in this context, knowledge of the data used it this research is employed to verify the ways in which these journals are treated by the *Web of Science* (in terms of the Impact Factors of the Journals and the Number of Citations of the Selected Articles) and by the Sucupira platform (*Qualis* – Public and Business Administration, Accounting and Tourism).

Table 1 - Data from the journals

	Journal	Qualis administration	Impact factor
01	*Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*	A1	5.761-2021
02	*Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*	A1	6.408-2021
03	*Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*	A1	6.408-2021
04	*International Small Business Journal*	A1	6.413-2021
05	*Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*	-	6.408-2021
06	*International Journal of Manpower*	A1	3.295-2021
07	*Small Business Economics*	-	7.096-2021
08	*International Business Review*	A1	8.047-2021
09	*Research Policy*	-	9.473-2021
10	*Technological Forecasting and Social Change*	A1	10.884-2021
11	*International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*	A1	-
12	*Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*	-	0.69-2021
13	*Organization Science*	-	5.152-2021
14	*Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*	A1	5.761-2021
15	*Journal of Business Venturing*	-	13.139-2021
16	*European Business Review*	A2	1.07-2021
17	*Journal of Heritage Tourism*	-	0.69-2021
18	*Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*	-	-
19	*Philosophy of Management*	-	0.37-2021
20	*Management Journal – REGE*	B1	0.34-2021
21	*Journal of International Entrepreneurship*	A2	0.69-2021
22	*Journal of Accounting, Management and Governance*	B1	0.05-2021
23	*Tourism and Hospitality Research*	A2	0.79-2021
24	*Small Business Economics*	-	7.096-2021

Source: Self elaboration. Based on *Web of Science* and Sucupira platforms.

Analysis of *journals* — *Qualis* and impact factors of selected journals

The analysis of the data extracted from the *Web of Science* revealed that two of the included journals are Brazilian. The first of these journals is Revista de Gestão (REGE), which publishes articles in Portuguese and English and is classified in the Sucupira Platform as B1 in the evaluation area Public and Business Administration, Accounting Sciences and Tourism. The second of these journals is the Journal of Accounting, Management and Governance, which also publishes articles in both languages and is classified as B1 in the specified area.

Among the journals included in this review, 09 were classified as A1, 03 as A2, and 02 as B1. Furthermore, 14 journals are associated with relevant classifications in the Sucupira Platform, in which focus on areas A and B. Interestingly, the journals *Research Policy, the Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* and the *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* are not associated with classifications in the field of administration but are instead assigned to the fields of engineering, interdisciplinary and computer science.

Apparently, the other journals were not associated with any classification on the national platform in the area of administration because they are not registered on the Sucupira platform. Nevertheless, as Table 1 shows, most of these *journals* have relevant impact factors on the *Web of Science* database.

The impact factors of the journals were extracted from the *Web of Science* data platform and exhibited significant variation; namely, The *Journal of Business Venturing* was the *journal* that featured the highest impact factor, which was 13,139 in 2021 (i.e., the last base year), while Revista de Contabilidade, Gestão and Governança exhibited the lowest impact factor, which was 0.05 in 2021 (i.e., the last base year). These issues are essential because they reveal information regarding the selected journals that can help researchers and readers understand how these journals are being treated by the *Web of Science* database and the Sucupira platform.

In Table 2, the titles of these articles will be presented, their authors and year of publication, the number of citations (Cit.) and the methodological classifications that are listed in accordance with Table 1.

Table 2 - Articles data

	Titles of articles	References	Citations	Methodological classification
01	*Discovery and creation: alternative theories of entrepreneurial action*	Alvarez and Barney (2007)	1025	Theoretical Test
02	*A model of middle-level managers. Entrepreneurial behavior*	Kuratko *et al*. (2005)	301	Literature Review
03	*The determinants of corporate entrepreneurial intention within small and newly established firms*	Fini *et al*. (2012)	132	Empirical – Quantitative
04	*The emergence of entrepreneurial action: at the crossroads between institutional logics and individual life-orientation*	Spedale and Watson (2014)	43	Theoretical Test
05	*Everyday entrepreneurial action and cultural embeddedness: an institutional logics perspective*	Greenman (2013)	35	Empirical – Qualitative
06	*How entrepreneurial actions transform customer capital through time: exploring and exploiting knowledge in an open-mindedness contexto*	Wensley *et al*. (2011)	23	Empirical – Qualitative
07	*Environmental effects on the cognitions of corporate and independent entrepreneurs*	Garrett and Holland (2015)	20	Literature Review
08	*Chinese immigrants in network marketing business in Western host country context*	Dai *et al*. (2011)	19	Empirical - Qualitative and Quantitative
09	*Taking leaps of faith: evaluation criteria and resource commitments for early-stage inventions*	Kim *et al*. (2019)	11	Empirical – Quantitative
10	*Environmental jolts, entrepreneurial actions and value creation: a case study of Trend Micro*	Liu *et al*. (2007)	7	Empirical - _ Qualitative
11	*Venture creation persistence: overcoming stage-gate issues*	Meek and Williams (2018)	6	Empirical – Qualitative
12	*The role of action-control beliefs in developing entrepreneurial expertise*	Markowska (2018)	4	Systematic Review
13	*Deconstructing the outsider puzzle: the legitimation journey of novelty*	Cattani *et al*. (2017)	3	Theoretical Test
14	*Computational modeling of entrepreneurship grounded in Austrian economics: insights for strategic entrepreneurship and the opportunity debate*	Keyhani (2019)	3	Literature Review
15	*Cracks in the wall: entrepreneurial action theory and the weakening presumption of intended rationality*	Hunt *et al*. (2022)	3	Empirical - Qualitative and Quantitative
16	*Understanding entrepreneurial deviance through social learning and entrepreneurial action theory: an empirical study*	Alonso *et al*. (2020)	2	Theoretical Empirical - Quantitative
17	*Sense of place and uncertain socioeconomic conditions: contributions of local cuisine to culinary tourism*	Alonso and Kok (2020)	2	Empirical – Qualitative
18	*Research on cultivation scheme based on TPB of entrepreneurial talents in Chinese local application-oriented universities*	Bo (2017)	2	Empirical – Qualitative
19	*Uncertainty as entrepreneurial motivation: tuche, karma and the necessity of action*	Roy (2020)	1	Literature Review
20	*Survival of postincubated technology-based companies: study of the entrepreneurial action mobilization and use of resources*	Tumelero *et al*. (2016)	0	Empirical – Quantitative
21	*Entrepreneurial cognition and behavior in the discovery and creation of international opportunities*	Oyson and Whittaker (2015)	0	Empirical - Qualitative
22	*Entrepreneurial action in the public sector: the "postpurchase" sector of a public University of Minas Gerais*	Lacerda and Andrade (2021)	0	Empirical - Qualitative
23	*Entrepreneurial action and unprecedented uncertainty: the cases of New South Wales regional hospitality and tourism firms.*	O'Shea *et al*. (2021)	0	Empirical - Qualitative
24	*Distinguishing unpredictability from uncertainty in entrepreneurial action theory*	Angus *et al*. (2022).	0	Empirical - Quantitative

Source: Self elaboration. Based on articles selected from the *Web of Science* database.

Analysis of articles – Number of citations and methodological classification of the selected articles

Regarding the number of citations of the selected articles, article 01 was published in the *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* and cited 1,025 times according to the *Web of Science* database*;* article 02 was published in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* and cited 301 times; and article 03 was also published in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* and cited 132 times on the platform. Therefore, the number of citations of these studies varied significantly, and a significant decrease was observed in the number of citations from the first article to the third. In addition, the journal *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* was notable in this study because it included the two most cited articles, in addition to its high impact factor.

Furthermore, the three most cited articles addressed conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action that focused on commercial entrepreneurship; thus, they presented explorations of new business opportunities, a type of entrepreneurial behavior that can result in new attributions for individuals in companies and the generation of new values within companies with the purpose of enhancing their results and obtaining profits.

When dealing with the methodological classification, 08 articles are theoretical; 09 works are theoretical and empirical, where the data analysis was classified as qualitative, which does not use numerical data in its results and this research format involves numerous forms of study, in addition to assisting in the knowledge of agents (GODOY; BALSINI, 2010).

In addition, 5 articles were quantitative. Finally, in 2 articles, the methodology was both qualitative and quantitative; that is, the authors employed a mixed-methods approach that integrated these two methods in an attempt to obtain better results, which has come to represent a trend in contemporary studies. Theoretical articles accounted for 33.33% of all the studies included in the analysis. In contrast, 66.67% of the studies were theoretical-empirical, thus confirming the claim that theoretical-empirical studies have been conducted to the detriment of theoretical contributions.

Understanding entrepreneurial action: different perspectives

Table 3 presents the authors and year of publication of the included studies as well as the conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action included in these studies.

Table 3 - Conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action

Reference		Conceptualization of entrepreneurial action
01	Alvarez and Barney (2007)	Any entrepreneurial activity that contributes to the formation and exploitation of opportunities (SHANE; VENKATARAMAN, 2000; SHANE, 2003).
02	Kuratko *et al*. (2005)	The result of behavioral action on the part of the entrepreneur; at the individual level, it can result in promotions, new attributions and financial rewards, while at the organizational level, it can facilitate the establishment of an entrepreneurial organizational culture, thus enabling organizations to obtain competitive advantages and improve their reputations among shareholders (KURATKO *et al*., 2005).
03	Fini *et al*. (2012)	These actions aim to generate new value within companies by encouraging innovative, proactive and risky behaviors (IRELAND *et al*., 2001).
04	Spedale and Watson (2014)	Adventurous, creative or innovative exchanges (or agreements) between the entrepreneurial actor's company and other parties with whom the company trades (WATSON, 2013).
05	Greenman (2013)	Type of human action in which institutional logics are expected to face pressure (BECKERT, 1999); entrepreneurial action thus occurs in the context of the connection between individual purposeful action and collective cultural values and can thus interrupt the institutionalization process. Counterintuitively, it can instead contribute to the reproduction of dominant institutional logics based on isomorphic pressures, in which context it is expected to enable organizations to gain legitimacy and overcome their responsibilities, for example, in terms of novelty and scale (HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2008).
06	Wensley *et al*. (2011)	Any set of newly formed actions through which companies seek to take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities that rivals have not noticed (KURATKO *et al*., 2005).
07	Garrett and Holland (2015)	It consists of two stages: attention and evaluation. The first of these stages - attention - pertains to whether people recognize the opportunities offered by changes in their environment. The second stage of entrepreneurial action is evaluation. At this stage, the prospective entrepreneur determines whether or not an opportunity that has been recognized represents an attractive path toward action (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
08	Dai *et al*. (2011)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006) or newly formed behavior through which unnoticed opportunities can be exploited (KURATKO *et al*., 2001).
09	Kim *et al*. (2019)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
10	Liu *et al*. (2007)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006). A means of seeking opportunities for value creation. Once entrepreneurs perceive an opportunity, they must identify the steps necessary to exploit it. This action is what truly constitutes an entrepreneurial action (LIU *et al*., 2007).
11	Meek and Williams (2018)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
12	Markowska (2018)	Intentional behaviors directed by goals that lead to an outcome (FRESE; SABINI, 1985; SKINNER *et al*., 1988).
13	Cattani *et al*. (2017)	Any activity on the part of entrepreneurs who can commit to the creation and exploration of new opportunities (ALVAREZ; BARNEY, 2007).
14	Keyhani (2019)	The creation or exploitation of an opportunity that is perceived as a discovery, i.e., processes of disequilibrium in motion (KEYHANI, 2019).
15	Hunt *et al*. (2022)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
16	Alonso *et al*. (2020)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
17	Alonso and Kok (2020)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
18	Bo (2017)	An attitude or behavioral tendency pertaining to the entrepreneurial potential for the development of business activities (BO, 2017).
19	Roy (2020)	Process related to the exercise of the entrepreneurial individual in achieving a determined objective, despite the uncertainty in the environment (ROY, 2020).
20	Tumelero *et al*. (2016)	Set of actions developed by the entrepreneurial individual, which consist of the opportunities and/or needs faced in the day-to-day life of a company, implying the development of entrepreneurial practices and the allocation and use of resources to respond to internal and external demands (DRUCKER, 1993; MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006; SHANE; VENKATARAMAN, 2000; SCHUMPETER, 1939).
21	Oyson and Whittaker (2015)	A way to generate entrepreneurial opportunities because it is during entrepreneurial action that the individual is able to interact with their environment and develop their cognition (OYSON; WHITTAKER, 2015).
22	Lacerda and Andrade (2021)	Collective action that aims to provide economic value based on the creation of new goods and services (BOSZCZOWSKI; TEIXEIRA, 2012).
23	O'Shea *et al*. (2021)	Behavior in response to a judgment decision that is under conditions of uncertainty about a possible profit opportunity (MC MULLEN; SHEPHERD, 2006).
24	Angus *et al*. (2022)	Decision making in business ventures under conditions of uncertainty (WOOD *et al*., 2021).

Source: Self elaboration. Based on articles selected from the *Web of Science* database.

Table 3 reveal that few articles have addressed the definition of entrepreneurial action. In addition, various authors have understood entrepreneurial action from different perspectives. Importantly, 8 articles focused on the conceptualizations of the term entrepreneurial action developed by McMullen and Shepherd (2006), thus demonstrating the prevalence of these authors in this area, to the point that their concepts have been widely used for years. The work and research interests of these authors were oriented toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial action, which highlights the importance of these individuals in attempts to advance the research in this field. They consider entrepreneurial action as a possible opportunity that favors obtaining profit, which will depend on the behavior of the entrepreneurial individual in a scenario of uncertainty.

The second author in evidence according to the research is Donald F. Kuratko. His research interests focused on entrepreneurship, corporate entrepreneurship, corporate innovation and entrepreneurial leadership. Kuratko, who partnered with other researchers, namely, Ireland, Covin, Hornsby and Bishop, conducted research that viewed entrepreneurial action as behavioral action on the part of the entrepreneur, which involves by taking advantage of opportunities. Scott Shane and Sankaran Venkataraman also featured prominently in this context. Like the other authors mentioned in this context, these researchers focused on entrepreneurship and understood entrepreneurial action in terms of the exploration of opportunities or the daily needs of companies.

Through the analysis of the 24 works, it is evident that most of the authors directed the definitions of entrepreneurial action to the private sector. In this way, the action carried out by the entrepreneurial individual has the ideal result of obtaining profit. Therefore, he must be willing to take risks and face threats arising from the market to achieve success. In contrast, Lacerda and Andrade (2021) focused on the public sector, in which context entrepreneurial action aims to improve the goods and services provided to society (BOSZCOWSKI; TEIXEIRA, 2012).

Next, the twenty-four studies were examined using content analysis (MORAES, 1999), which led to the identification of seven categories of analysis. Thus, the conceptualizations of entrepreneurial action are presented in terms of 7 categories that emerged from the analyses of the articles that were included in the review, namely, "Exploitation of Opportunities", "Institutional Logics", "Entrepreneurial Behavior", "Uncertainty", “Value Creation”, “Competitive Advantage” and “Entrepreneurial Process”. Given this, each category of analysis will be conceptualized, in order to highlight the theoretical choice and presented separately with the authors of the proposed articles that fall within them. Furthermore, it can be observed that some authors are allocated to more than one category, due to the scope of the conceptualization of the term entrepreneurial action in these studies, as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 - Categories of analysis and research agenda

Category	Definition	Authors
Exploitation of opportunities	"Results of an accidental discovery or process developed over time or even as a construction by the subject" (MACHADO, 2013, p. 03). The identification of an opportunity can occur through a legacy, deliberate or indeterminate and casual search (SHEPHERD; DETIENNE, 2005). "Something potential that promotes new values to consumers through services or products" (CHA *et al.*, 2010, p. 38). Experience and prior knowledge can influence the process of identifying and exploiting opportunities, especially in situations that must be adjusted to suit market requirements. In addition, social networks can be used as providers of essential information pertaining to the exploitation of opportunities (MACHADO; BASAGLIA, 2015).	Alvarez and Barney (2007); Liu *et al*. (2007); Dai *et al*. (2011); Wensley *et al*. (2011); Garrett and Holland (2015); Oyson and Whitaker (2015); Tumelero *et al*. (2016); Meek and Williams (2018); Keyhani (2019); Alonso and Kok (2020); Alonso *et al*. (2020); Lacerda and Andrade (2021); Hunt *et al*. (2022).
Institutional logics	Rules, practices, shared knowledge and beliefs that can facilitate the structuring of cognition and direct decision-making in the organizational field (LOUNSBURY, 2007), thereby functioning as guides concerning the organizational reality among the members of the organization (LAWRENCE; PHILLIPS, 2004). Furthermore, these factors guide social actions, enabling the actors involved in this process to understand reality and correct their behavior (GREENWOOD *et al*., 2011; THORNTON, 2004).	Kuratko *et al*. (2005); Greenman (2013); Spedale and Watson (2014); Oyson and Whittaker (2015); Cattani *et al*. (2017).
Entrepreneurial behavior	Companies can be renewed if they rely on entrepreneurial foundations and attitudes in their administrative practices. Entrepreneurs are able to create changes, generate and explore ideas and admit risks throughout the process of discovering opportunities (SCHUMPETER, 1954 apud FILION, 1998). From this perspective, companies may be prepared to adapt to scenarios featuring instability and uncertainty and to promote expansion, which may occur through new opportunities (TOMEI; FERRARI, 2008).	Kuratko *et al*. (2005); Liu *et al*. (2007); Oyson and Whittaker (2015); Bo (2017); Markowska (2018); Hunt *et al*. (2022).
Uncertainty	In dynamic and complex environments, several factors that pertain to the administrative processes are not clearly revealed, in which context the choice and identification of effective alternatives facilitate the response to environmental demands. Consequently, managers find it difficult to predict the results or effects of decisions (EL-NADI, 2007). Uncertainty represents the essence of the administrative process because it is a problem that must be managed and that may hinder professionals' ability to plan, which may lead to success or failure on the part of managers (THOMPSON, 1967).	Liu *et al*. (2007); Garrett and Holland (2015); Kim *et al*. (2019); Roy (2020); Alonso and Kok (2020); O'Shea *et al*. (2021); Angus *et al*. (2022).
Value creation	The main objective that must be pursued by companies and organizations through strategies that are implemented in various functional areas (GARTNER; GARCIA, 2005). Therefore, in most decisions, competencies, resources, processes, tactical activities and the focus of potentialities are relevant with regard to the elaboration and delivery of products or services of value that are desired by the customer (LOWSON, 2001).	Kuratko *et al*. (2005); Liu *et al*. (2007); Fini *et al*. (2012).
Competitive advantage	The use of competitive strategies to obtain a favorable positioning among competitors (rivals), i.e., the adoption of various practices that can promote the achievement of organizational goals, as these achievements are often limited due to the reaction capacity of the sector (PORTER, 1998). In addition, the notion of competitive advantage can be analyzed in terms of the interval between the expenses incurred with regard to customers and the opportunity costs faced by suppliers, which depend on the scenario in which the company is involved and its relationships within the vertical chain (BRANDENBURGER; STUART, 1996; ADNER; ZEMSKY, 2006; ADEGBESAN, 2009); in this context, social and dynamic aspects influence the way in which the value created by the actors involved in this process is recognized (BLYLER; COFF, 2003).	Kuratko *et al*. (2005); Liu *et al*. (2007).
Entrepreneurial process	A grouping of several individuals under a legal form; however, this process may be implemented individually with the aim of creating a business plan, thereby putting into place a new or existing idea. It is necessary for the entrepreneurial individual to know how to plan the steps to create their business and the future strategies that will guide the organization towards satisfactory results. The entrepreneur must be able to identify and evaluate opportunities and ideas, develop a business plan, identify and capture necessary resources and lead the company (GASPAR, 2009).	Kuratko *et al*. (2005); Liu *et al*. (2007); Oyson and Whittaker (2015); Keyhani (2019); Roy (2020); Lacerda and Andrade (2021).

Source: Self elaboration. Based on articles selected from *Web of Science* database.

In Table 4, each category is presented conceptually alongside the corresponding authors. From this perspective, it is possible to understand these individuals in relation to each category. In addition, to complement this research, a future research agenda is developed for each category, with the purpose of encouraging the development of new research in the area.

- *Exploitation of Opportunities*: This category sought to analyze the opportunities that emerge for the entrepreneur and the ways in which the entrepreneur should act to develop those opportunities satisfactorily. Thus, we suggest that studies should emphasize the exploration of opportunities in which Brazilian entrepreneurs engage when establishing their ventures with the purpose of identifying the moments when individual choose to open a business and exploring how they take advantage of the available opportunities to promote continual innovation.
- *Institutional Logics*: In this category, the importance of institutional logics with regard to organizational development, decision-making and behavior on the part of individuals was presented. Therefore, we suggest that studies should relate entrepreneurial action to institutional theory to help us understand the relationships among these conceptions.
- *Entrepreneurial Behavio*r: This category emphasized the behavior of the entrepreneurial individual who contributes significantly to administrative practices. Thus, we suggest that articles should address the entrepreneurial behavior that emerges in Brazilian microenterprises with the purpose of analyzing the role and conduct of the entrepreneur who seeks to remain in the market in a competitive scenario.
- *Uncertainty*: This category focused on the complex uncertainties that emerge in administrative scenarios and the importance of managers' ability to learn to deal with such issues to ensure equilibrium in the market. Thus, it is suggested that theoretical studies should present various understandings related to uncertainty in an entrepreneurial environment to make it possible to clarify this theme for researchers and highlight the ways in which entrepreneurs should react to uncertainty.
- *Value Creation*: This category emphasizes the need for individuals to employ practices that contribute to the creation of value within companies, thus making it possible for the company to deliver satisfactory services or products to its customers. From this perspective, we suggest that studies should address the creation of value in federal universities of Minas Gerais by employees with the goal of understanding the meaning and importance that these individuals attribute to the organization and the ways in which they collaborate to achieve these goals.
- *Competitive Advantage*: In this category, the assumptions underlying the notion of competitive advantage were addressed to ensure that entrepreneurs employ various strategies to deal with competition. Thus, we suggest that studies should discuss competitive advantages in the public sector with the goal of investigating the presence of competitiveness in the sector and exploring the potential consequences of this situation for society.
- *Entrepreneurial Process*: This category represents the entrepreneurial process that is developed by the entrepreneur, who must start with a good business plan and know how to take advantage of opportunities and lead the company. In view of this, research is suggested that emphasizes the entrepreneurial process developed by people who started their businesses because they did not find opportunities in the job market with the purpose of understanding how these individuals manage these organizations.

The analysis categories were positioned in a logical sequence of reasoning as an alternative for understanding the term entrepreneurial action. Therefore, entrepreneurial action can be analyzed based on the discovery or creation of an opportunity that has been visualized by the individual entrepreneur,

who must act in accordance with the institutional norms of the organization, in which context his or her behavior influences the company in uncertain scenarios that are favored by the market. Therefore, the entrepreneur is able to explore the available opportunities based on the organizational reality in an attempt to create value and obtain competitive advantages over other enterprises. This process can be analyzed as part of the entrepreneurial process.

FINAL REMARKS

This study aimed to conduct a scoping review of the literature on entrepreneurial action available on the *Web of Science* data platform. The results indicated that the conceptualization of entrepreneurial action can be understood in terms of 7 categories, namely, "Exploitation of Opportunities", "Institutional Logics", "Behavior of Entrepreneurs", "Uncertainty", "Creation of Value", "Competitive Advantage" and "Entrepreneurial Process". In addition, most authors understood entrepreneurial action in a comprehensive way, such that their conceptualizations could be assigned to more than one category of analysis. Notably, no category stood out from the others because all categories are important for understanding entrepreneurial action; however, according to this study, the category "Exploration of Opportunities" was associated with the largest number of authors. Therefore, these categories improved our understanding of how the authors contextualized entrepreneurial action, which represents the major contribution of the study.

An additional contribution of this study lies in the fact that it proposed a framework for entrepreneurial action is presented based on the categories of analysis discovered as part of this research; the various definitions of entrepreneurial action that have been proposed by various authors over the years are also presented, which represents an additional contribution. Thus, this study may encourage the development of new studies that can address entrepreneurial action both in Brazil and on a global scale. One limitation of the study pertains to its exclusive use of the *Web of Science* platform, although this approach made it possible to guarantee the objective of the study due to the quantity, quality and analysis of the results found on this platform.

Regarding recommendations for future research, first, we suggest that new, in-depth studies of the literature on this subject should be conducted by reference to databases. In addition, we recommend that future researchers who seek to conduct theoretical studies should emphasize the methodological procedures discussed in this article, which can enhance readers' understanding and enable researchers to focus their research on the definition of entrepreneurial action, as many authors have focused solely on its origin, development or results, thus leaving research gaps regarding its definition.

The future research agendas suggested by some of the authors of the articles included in this review also highlight the need for studies that address entrepreneurial action and the creation of value in response to environmental changes, the entrepreneurial profile and empirical and contextual studies on entrepreneurial action. The review of literature available on the *Web of Science* data platform conducted for this research revealed few reviews focused on entrepreneurial action because most relevant studies have focused on entrepreneurship or its interactions with other contexts. The analysis of the theme based on seven categories showed that the authors have different perceptions on the subject, in addition to being considered a multifaceted term, as it was found that some definitions are present in more than one category, which can generate a certain fragility of the concept.

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