Entrepreneurial Orientation: An Extended Model

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Abstract:

This paper reviewed Miller's conceptual definition of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and its related dimensions. These dimensions – innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking are generally viewed as 'action-based' indicators. The review of literatures indicated that EO is also based on the goals, temperaments and philosophy of managers, which are considered as 'value-based' indicators. However, these 'value-based' indicators are not considered as a part of EO. As such, this paper explored the strategic management literatures and the theory of planned behaviour to gain some insights in order to propose an extension to Miller's original model which contains only three dimensions. The two additional proposed dimensions are fantasy-frame and missionary-outlook. It is recommended that more empirical research be conducted on the relationship between the additional dimensions and firm performance. Further research should also be conducted on the entire five dimensions.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation; Strategic Management; Planned behaviour; Fiction-frame; Missionary-outlook.

INTRODUCTION

Scholars studying entrepreneurship have been traditionally focusing their attention on the individual level. Miller (1983) suggests that entrepreneurship is the process of self-renewal by which organisations recreate themselves and their markets through innovation and risk-taking. Miller's (1983) definition goes beyond traditional conceptualisation of entrepreneurship where the term is attributed to a dominant individual, usually the owner who makes decision for the firm. This dominant individual is generally seen as an 'actor' with special attributes. However, in today's turbulent business environment and pressing need for SMEs to pursue growth as an "antidote to lethal externalities" (Wolff, Pett, & Ring, 2015), there is continuous need for 'creative regeneration' in the pursuit of new opportunities and sustainable competitive advantage (Chi-hsiang, 2015), which is often beyond the capability of a dominant actor (Miller, 1983; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003; Hughes, *et al*, 2011).

Accordingly, the attention of researchers has shifted from studying the behaviour of individuals (entrepreneur) to studying the behaviour of firms. This shift is evidenced by the various terms used, such as intrapreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial posture, corporate venturing or strategic entrepreneurship (Kantur, 2016). Miller (1983) opines that an entrepreneurial firm undertakes risky venture, is involved in product-market innovation, and is first to come up with 'proactive' changes that put it ahead of its competitors. EO is commonly regarded as a firm level activity focused on opportunity recognition and exploitation (Covin & Wales, 2011; Covin & Lumpkin, 2011). Consequently, most researchers agree that EO has three dimensions (innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking) (Jalali, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2014; Wolff, Pett, & Ring, 2015; Kantur, 2016).

EO was originally conceptualised by Miller (1983) as having three dimensions – innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking. However, Miller (2011) and Covin and Lumpkin (2011) have noted that an unexplored issue is whether EO is fundamentally behavioural in nature or is concerned with attitudinal, philosophical, or dispositional characteristic among strategic decision makers. It is argued that the Miller/Covin and Slevin's EO conceptualisation and the scale used to measure it includes behavioural and attitudinal components (Miller, 2011). It is argued that: "Current conceptualizations at the firm-level incorporate attitudes, dispositions, and behaviors which create confusion in the field" (Kantur, 2016). This led to calls for future research in EO to differentiate between the behavioural and attitudinal dimensions of EO (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Miller & Friesen, 1982), Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). There are also calls to reconceptualise the EO (Wales, Gupta, & Mousa, 2013; Anderson, Kreiser, Kuratko, Hornsby, & Eshima, 2014).

An effort in this direction is Anderson, Patrick, Kreiser, Kuratko, Jeffrey, Hornsby, and Eshima's, (2015) proposed re-conceptualisation. The researchers argue that (1) EO is a multidimensional construct consisting of two non-interchangeable dimensions – entrepreneurial behaviours and managerial attitude towards risk; (2) there is positive covariance between these two dimensions; and (3) both dimensions are fundamentally necessary for EO to exist. Based on this, it was proposed that Miller's (1983) conceptualisation of EO should be collapsed into two distinct dimensions 1) entrepreneurial behaviours (consisting of innovativeness and proactiveness) and 2) managerial attitude towards risk. This paper followed this suggestion and treats EO as consisting of behavioural dimension, termed in this paper as action-based EO, and attitudinal dimension, termed here as value-based EO, and treats the two as distinct constructs. The paper therefore proposes two additional dimensions to the EO, (fantasy-frame and missionary outlook) to extend Miller's model and close this gap.

Miller, Lumpkin and Dess's EO Model

EO was originally conceptualised by Miller (1983) as having three dimensions: 1) innovativeness; 2) risk-taking; and 3) pro-activeness. Innovativeness refers to firms' "development and use of new ideas or behaviours in organizations manifested in terms of a new product, service or method of production or a new market, organizational structure or administrative system" (Perez-Luno, Wiklund & Cabrera 2011). Risk-taking is the willingness to be "bold and aggressive in pursuing opportunities" and the willingness to make investment decisions under conditions of uncertainty (Jalali, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2014; Wolff, Pett, & Ring, 2015). It represents a danger that planned outputs and/or outcomes might not happen as anticipated due to factors outside the firm's control. A firm with high appetite for

risk-taking will exhibit a higher willingness to make investments in projects that have uncertain outcomes (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Pro-activeness is concerned with "seeking new opportunities which may or may not be related to the present line of operations, introduction of new products and brands ahead of competition and strategically eliminating operations, which are in the mature or declining stages of the life cycle" (Venkatraman 1989; Jalali, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2014). It emphasises the importance of first-mover initiative in the entrepreneurial process. Proactive entrepreneurs are characterised by opportunity-seeking and forward-looking perspective.

Dess and Lumpkin (1996) extended Miller's (1983) model to include; autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. However, the three dimensions posited by Miller, (1983) appear to be the most widespread in use because they are "more phenomenon-focused—that is, it specifies what EO looks like" (Covin & Wales, 2011). These dimensions have also been found to have high levels of reliability and validity in numerous studies (e.g., Barringer & Bluedorn, 1999; Knight, 1997). "Based on this, several researchers have agreed that EO is a combination of the three dimensions" (Shepherd & Wiklund, 2005). This view is however contested by Lumpkin and Dess (2001:3) who argue that proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness are "distinct concepts with unique relationships to performance outcomes". Lumpkin and Dess (2001) also believe that the autonomy dimension is similarly distinct. This paper seeks to extend Miller's (1983) model. Figure I below shows the existing conceptualisation of the EO model, which includes Miller's (1983) and Lumpkin and Dess's (2001) views.

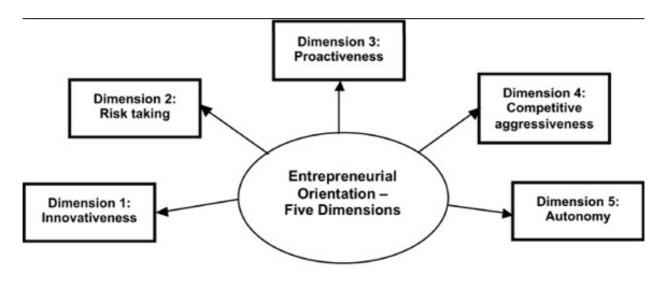


Figure 1: Dimensions of EO
Source: Self-compiled, adopted from supporting literature on EO

Rationale for Extending Miller's EO Model

One limitation in Miller's (1983) and other similar EO models (e.g. Lumpkin & Dess, 2001) is that they only provide explanation of 'what' actions a firm can take in response to environmental circumstances. Consequently, the models have largely focused on organisational behaviour and decision-making processes and modes. This is why the

dimensions used in the model are called 'action-based' dimensions of EO. The 'trigger' for that behaviour and mode is, however, largely ignored. As a result, the models only provide half the explanation or definition of EO and its relationship with firm performance. The other half is an explanation for the 'why' – the intention, values, emotions and traits (the 'value-based' dimensions) that inform the way the firm responds to opportunities and threats.

The EO literatures concede that EO is "determined by executives on the basis of their goals and temperaments" (Miller & Friesen, 1982); is based on "management styles and operating management philosophy" (Covin & Slevin (1989:77); is the "operating set of beliefs and norms" (Khandwalla, 1976/1977); is a strategic construct whose conceptual domain includes certain firm-level outcomes and management-related preferences, beliefs, and behaviours as expressed among a firm's top-level managers (Covin, Green, & Slevin, 2006). These dimensions are not captured in Miller/Covin and Sleven's EO conceptualisation. Furthermore, it is suggested that firms may be unsuccessful in translating EO into performance benefits if it is not properly aligned with the firm's leadership behaviours (Brettel, Engelen, Gupta & Strenger, 2015). This follows Koslowsky *et al.* (1997) observations that 1) attitude and behaviour are mutually reinforcing, 2) behaviour is an outcome of attitude and therefore sustained engagement in a particular behaviour reinforces the underlying attitude. This indicates the need for further research to identify potential new elements of EO that address these theoretically distinct issues (Covin & Miller, 2014).

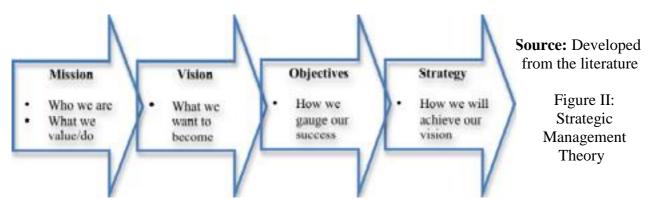
Covin and Miller (2014) have recommended new research aimed at identifying potential new dimensions of EO. It has also been argued that not much has been done in this area since Dess and Lumpkin's (1996) initiative, which added the dimensions of autonomy and aggressive competitiveness. These dimensions did not find much support in the literature on the grounds that autonomy is difficult to measure (Fairoz, Hirobumi & Tanaka, 2010) and that competitive aggressiveness has been captured in Miller's (1983) proactiveness dimension. Lyon, Lumpkin and Dess (2000) also raised the need for advancing the EO construct. It has also been argued that "little progress has been made in the development of new approaches to EO's assessment" (Covin & Wales, 2012). Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin, and Frese (2009) have similarly argued that the EO construct would benefit from including additional variables. These calls are appropriate especially given the argument that both Miller's (1983) and Lumpkin and Dess's (1996) work focus on attitudinal aspect of the entrepreneurial firm, which are seen as 'action-based'. It is believed that emotions and trait, which are 'valuebased', are missing from the existing conceptualisation of EO. Value-based dimensions are argued to be distinct and integral concepts of entrepreneurship and therefore should be part of the EO construct (Gerschewski, Lindsay & Rose, 2016). In line with this, it is argued that "firm values when coupled with appropriate behaviours can lead to business growth", (Wolf, Pett & Ring, 2015). This paper is a response to these calls to bridge the gap. It proposes two additional value-based dimensions – fantasy-frame and missionary-outlook.

Extending the EO Model

To extend Miller's model, strategic management theory, theory of transformational leadership, theory of planned behaviour and theories of entrepreneurial intentions were explored. The predominant terms used in the strategic management literature to describe management goals and operating philosophy are vision and mission. Collins and Porras (1994) describe vision as 'outstanding achievement', 'audacious, exhilarating goals that galvanize people' and 'dreams of what we want to be'. Hamel and Prahalad (1989) argue that

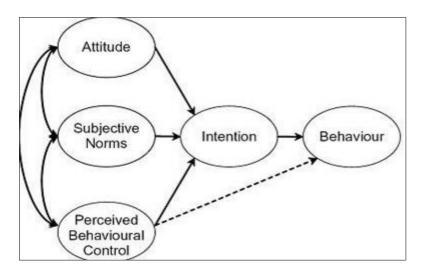
to succeed, a firm need much more that a vision. It must also have the 'intent' to succeed. Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership as the process of raising "the followers' level of consciousness about the importance and value of desired outcomes and the methods of reaching those outcomes". A combination of vision and intent constitutes the 'manager's theory' ('fantasy-frame' – its 'success template') about how the firm could gain competitive advantage and actualise its desired future (Barney & Hesterly, 2012; Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2011). This refers to desired future state of the firm – it's an imagined and keenly sought after reality, and a mental state its managers imagine and keen to actualise (Chi-hsiang, 2015). A firm's fantasy-frame (vision and its ability to actualise it) affects its performance (Caridi-Zahavi, Carmeli & Arazy, 2016)

The firm's mission is defined as its overriding purpose – "a sense of calling" (Fry, Latham, Clinebell and Krahnke, 2016), which means 'what would be missed if the firm ceases to exist'. It is assumed that the mission is anchored on a 'core ideology' - a set of 'guiding principles' or 'core values' that are commonly shared by members of the firm and which forms the 'guiding principles' and 'core values' that drives its behaviour and actions. Collins and Porass (1994) suggest that a mission is akin to an eternal reason that provides the rationale or strategic logic for a firm's existence. However, to succeed, a firm needs more than a mission. It also requires a motivating aspiration. This includes intellectual stimulation, generation of enthusiasm and optimism that can raise the level of commitment and inspiration to deliver the organisational goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006; McCleskey, 2014; Hannah & Peng, 2016). Entrepreneurs are zealots who believe that they are on a 'mission from God'. The combination of zeal and focus on overriding purposes will sum up to what may be termed as the firm's missionary-outlook. A firm's missionary-outlook is its instinctive intuition – 'irrational righteousness' that feeds the drive to actualise the imagined, provides the strategic rationale and or logic and a high sense of optimism, which makes the firm competitively aggressive (Collins & Porras, 1998; Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2011; Hamel & Prahalad, 1994). Existing EO model does not cover the concepts of fiction-frame and missionary-outlook, which are considered the bedrock of planned actions. The strategic management theory is depicted in Figure II below.



The theory of planned behaviour, which is an update on the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977), is credited to Ajzen (1991). It deals with the antecedents of attitudes and subjective norms, which are assumed to determine intentions and actions. The theory postulates that behaviour is a function of salient information and beliefs, relevant to particular behaviours and subsequent actions. It distinguishes two kinds of beliefs: 1) behavioural beliefs, which are assumed to influence attitudes toward the behaviour. It refers to a person's attitude towards the behaviour and the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question, and 2) normative beliefs, which

constitute the underlying determinants of subjective norms. This is the 'predictor of intention', which refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). Figure III illustrates the theory of planned behaviour.



Source: Developed from the literature

Figure III: Theory of Planned Behaviour

The theory postulates that an outcome's subjective value contributes to the attitude towards the behaviour in direct proportion to the strength of the belief. It is related to the subjective probability of whether performing the behaviour would lead to the intended outcome and reward. On the other hand, normative beliefs (the predictor), deals with the likelihood of whether important referent individuals, groups or institutions would approve or disapprove of performing the behaviour. The theory argues that the immediate antecedent of any behaviour is the intention to perform the behaviour in question. The stronger a person's intention, the more the person is expected to try, and hence the greater the likelihood that the behaviour will actually be performed. It is argued that the theory of reasoned actions makes the case for differentiating between "entrepreneurial orientation" and "strategic entrepreneurship" at the firm-level analysis of entrepreneurship. As suggested by the theory, behavioural intentions are a function of attitude toward performing the behaviour and subjective norm, which explain behaviours (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). While the theory is mostly applied at individual level, Antoncic (2003) adopts it to understand risk-taking behaviours in the field of intrapreneurship. The author suggests that the entrepreneurial firm's culture and risk-taking proclivity will determine the risk-taking propensity, which influences behavioural intentions. behavioural intentions that are assumed to lead individual firm-level risk-taking behaviour in organisations (Antoncic, 2003).

The theory of planned behaviour dovetailed into the theory of entrepreneurial intention. In their review of the entrepreneurship literature, Liñán (2004); Izquierdo and Buelens (2008) identified four models that explain entrepreneurial intentions. The first model is Shapero's (1975) entrepreneurial event model. It posits that entrepreneurial intentions depend on: 1) the perception of desirability; 2) the propensity to act; and 3) the perception of feasibility. The next model is Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour, which consists of: 1) the subject's attitudes toward the behaviour; 2) subjective norms; and 3) the subject's perception of behavioural control. Third on the list is a model proposed by Bird (1988). This model posited that entrepreneurial intentions are based on a combination of personal and contextual factors.

Finally, Davidsson's (1995) model suggests that entrepreneurial intentions are a function of: conviction, defined by general attitudes (to change, competition, money, achievement, and autonomy) and domain attitudes (payoff, societal contribution and know how) (Mappigau & Maupa, 2013). It is generally assumed that the entrepreneurial intentions would facilitate the firm's engagement in entrepreneurial actions, such as sustained regeneration, organizational rejuvenation, strategic renewal, and domain redefinition and choice, which are the hallmark of EO (Kuratko, Morris, & Covin, 2011).

The strategic management theory, theory of planned behaviour and entrepreneurial intentions are relevant to the study of EO and its relationship with firm performance because the theories are able to provide insights into how personal values, beliefs and self-efficacy influence attitudes towards performance of behaviour and hence the outcome of that behaviour (Antoncic, 2003; Gerschewski, Lindsay & Rose, 2016). These issues are not covered in the existing EO model, which focuses only on the 'actions' of entrepreneurial firms. This indicates the need for further research to identify potential new elements of EO (Covin and Miller, 2014).

It is proposed that two additional dimensions that capture the goals, temperament and philosophy of owner/managers, be added. This is based on the findings of the literature review, which suggests the need to include 'value-based' variable in addition to the 'action-based' variables in Miller's EO model. Based on this, the proposed model for the EO/firm performance relationship could be stated as SFP = f(I, P, RT, FF, MO) where:

SFP = small firm performance; f = Function of I = innovativeness P = proactiveness RT = risk-taking FF = fantasy-frame MO = missionary-outlook

CONCLUSION

This paper sought to develop the EO literature through a theoretical research that aims to identify new dimensions that could added to Miller's (1983) original model as recommended by Covin and Miller (2014). There are a number of questions on whether EO, in its current form, encompasses dispositional or behavioural aspects at the firm level of analysis (Covin & Lumpkin, (2011). Zahra, Nielsen, and Bogner, (1999) had earlier suggested that future research in EO should differentiate between entrepreneurial disposition (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Miller & Friesen, 1982), orientation (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996), and actions (Zahra, 1991). There are also calls to reconceptualise EO (Anderson, Kreiser, Kuratko, Hornsby, & Eshima, 2014; Wales, Gupta, & Mousa, 2013).

Researchers have responded to this by separating 'value based' and 'action-based' constructs (Wolf, Pett & Ring, 2015). This division has also led other researchers to conceptualise firm-level entrepreneurship as consisting of distinct EO constructs, which describes 'behavioural intentions' and "strategic entrepreneurship"; which is concerned with sustained regeneration, organizational rejuvenation, strategic renewal, and domain redefinition (Kuratko, Morris, & Covin, 2011). Strategic management literatures offer a window on the value-based

constructs, which are conceptualised variously as vision, mission, foresight, strategic intent, viewpoint, ambition, etc., of the firm (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). Research in International Entrepreneurship lends support to this conceptualisation. This paper contributes to the theoretical development of new EO dimensions as suggested by Covin and Miller (2014). However, as stated by Gerschewski, Lindsay and Rose, (2016) more empirical research on a wider scale across many regions is required to test these theories. Future research should therefore take this into consideration.

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