WHAT MAKES DREAMS BECOME REALITY? INDIVIDUAL LEVEL CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AS MODERATORS OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION – BEHAVIOUR RELATIONSHIP (SUMMARY)

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WHAT MAKES DREAMS BECOME REALITY? INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AS MODERATORS OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION – BEHAVIOUR RELATIONSHIP

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Principal Topic

A considerable body of research has investigated how entrepreneurial intentions – the intentions to create an own firm – are formed (cf. Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014). Within this research stream, researchers have increasingly started to investigate the link between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial behaviour, generally confirming a robust relationship (Kautonen et al., 2015). However, existing studies lack in-depth theorizing what drives and explains the intention-behaviour link.

We theorize that cultural values affect the extent to which entrepreneurial intentions lead to entrepreneurial behaviour because economic action is embedded within societal and collective mechanisms (Granovetter, 1985; Baumol, 1990); therefore, culture is believed to have important implications for individuals’ economic behaviour (Autio et al., 2013; Wennberg et al., 2013).

Methods

We use a dataset from the GUESSS project (Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students’ Survey) which comprises the responses of more than 1,500 students from 15 countries who have taken part in the GUESSS survey both in 2011 and in 2013/14. For our individual-level cultural perceptions we use items from the GLOBE project (House et al., 2004) that have been answered by students individually. We use multi-level mixed-effects logistic regression models because in addition to our individual-level predictors, we control for several country-level variables.

Results and Implications

We find a strongly positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial behaviour. This relationship is significantly and negatively moderated by individual-level perceptions of power distance and in-group collectivism. Our results have important implications for entrepreneurship research in two main ways. First, we contribute to the small but growing body of literature that links entrepreneurial intentions with entrepreneurial behaviour (Kautonen et al., 2015) by offering explicit theorizing about the corresponding culture-related conceptual mechanism.

Second, we confirm and enrich the notion that the cultural context is crucial in explaining entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial behaviour. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first to explicitly theorize about and empirically test the effect of individual-level perceptions of cultural values on entrepreneurial behaviour.

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