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THE DIMENSIONALITY OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION RESEARCH: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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INTERACTIVE PAPER

THE DIMENSIONALITY OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION RESEARCH: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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Principal Topic

The various elaborations of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) that have appeared in the literature suggest that the raison d’etre for behaving entrepreneurially is to enhance performance (Covin & Lumpkin, 2011). Yet, there is no common understanding of how performance is operationalized and measured in EO research. In this study, we expand the knowledge frontier by (a) examining the extent to which performance has been examined as a consequence of EO, (b) identifying various dimensions of organizational performance in the EO literature, and (c) providing recommendations for selecting appropriate performance indicators in future EO research.

Method

We obtained a comprehensive sample of journal articles that test hypotheses linking EO with performance. We restricted our search to ‘scholarly’ journal publications because articles in these publications undergo a rigorous peer review process (Miller and Serzan, 1984), and so are generally believed to be of a higher quality than non-journal articles such as book chapters or unpublished works (David & Han, 2004). We relied on two procedures to capture journal articles: computerized keyword searches in the Business Source Premier, EconLit, and ABI/Inform databases and a search of the reference sections of recent EO articles.

Results and Implications

Our final sample consisted of 118 empirical journal articles linking EO with performance from the period from 1986 to 2011 (both inclusive). The first article to empirically explore the EO-performance linkage appeared in 1986 with the publication of Danny Miller and Jean-Marie Toulouse’s work in Management Science, and since then there has been a notable increase in the number of EO-performance studies published in journals. Our study, based on a review of performance measurement in EO research, has important implications in two areas: (1) it points toward important avenues for future inquiry to increase our understanding of the performance variable in EO research, and (2) it has practical implications for how to design studies where performance is the dependent variable. We offer EO researchers with actionable knowledge regarding which performance measures best depict each dimension of performance, which measures have been used quite extensively, which measures are of limited value, and which have been neglected in prior studies.

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