TO DO IT OR NOT TO DO IT, IT ALL DEPENDS: CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE EFFECT OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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Recommended Citation
Lin, Xiaohua; Koçak, Akın; Brännback, Malin; Mauer, René; and Albornoz, Carlos (2014) "TO DO IT OR NOT TO DO IT, IT ALL DEPENDS: CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE EFFECT OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION (INTERACTIVE PAPER)," Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research: Vol. 34 : Iss. 6 , Article 11. Available at: https://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol34/iss6/11

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Principal Topic

We know little about the role of motivation in general and achievement motivation (NAch) in particular on entrepreneurial intentions. We also do not know how NAch impacts, or interacts with, self-efficacy, one of the key drivers of intentions. Against this background, we therefore ask within this study: 1) What is the role of achievement motivation for the formation of entrepreneurial intent? 2) What are the impacts of NAch on self-efficacy another precursor to intentions? 3) How do cultural differences impact these relationships?

Method

The sample consists of 2000+ undergraduate students from Canada, Chile, China, Finland, Germany, and Turkey. Data were collected as a part of a large collaborative study on the psychological dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour. We performed the CFA for all items in the original motivation scale for each country and then applied structural equation modelling to test the hypothesized relationships for the six national subsamples.

Results and Implications

While some countries followed patterns similar to that of the original American studies on NAch, other countries had very different patterns of NAch impact on students’ intentions. In regression analyses for WOFO and intention we found for Canada, China, and Turkey that Mastery has a significant effect on intention. For both Chile and Finland Mastery and Competitiveness have significant effect on intention, while for Germany work and competitiveness have significant effect on intention.

The results provide several implications. First, assuming cognitive factors are universal in their impact on entrepreneurial intentions is incorrect. Second, the study demonstrates there are dilemmas of conducting certain cross-cultural studies and drawing generalizable conclusions. Third, this study shows that multi-cultural societies we may need to be more sensitive to these differences when encouraging students to consider entrepreneurship as a career and that it may not be appropriate to copy and paste educational systems across countries. What works to motivate entrepreneurship in one group of students may be very different from those in another country.

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