

Influence of Entrepreneurial Orientation in Export Performance

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating the influence that entrepreneurial orientation has on export performance of Portuguese footwear small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, a quantitative methodological approach was used, conducting a descriptive, exploratory and transversal empirical study, having applied a questionnaire to a sample of Portuguese companies exporting footwear.

The research results suggest that entrepreneurial orientation enhances export performance in the analysed SMEs, particularly innovation and proactiveness, through the amount of funds invested, human resources dedicated to this activity, number of new products or services introduced in the market and frequent change in product lines or services and materialization of a long-term perspective, which is accompanied by innovative activities or new businesses. Therefore, the findings sustain the necessity to invest in entrepreneurial orientation as a strategic determinant, which contributes to the growth of small firms in foreign markets.

Finally, the main limitation of this study is related to the sample size, since it was difficult to find companies willing to collaborate with this kind of research.

Keywords: entrepreneurial orientation, export performance, SMEs.

Introduction

Currently, Portuguese companies are in a complex, dynamic and globalized context, it is essential to recognize strategic variables that influence and enhance growth in foreign markets and contribute to improve medium and long term performance. Thereby, analysing strategic variables together with the knowledge of microeconomic reality, contributes to a more aware and efficient measures taken by economic agents that meets the challenges of constant change, bolder competitors and demanding consumers.

Entrepreneurial orientation, as a strategic determinant, contributes to the strategic formulation of business management and economic policies, designed to increase business performance in foreign markets by adding value.

However, in practice, there are many companies that still don't acknowledge the real importance of entrepreneurial orientation, conditioning their development, expansion and survival. So, it is essential to carry out tests with intent to identify and analyze key strategic variables and, eventually, establish