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Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension and Organizational Performance of Medium-Sized Food Manufacturing Firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract: *Entrepreneurial orientation dimension increases the firm's understanding of the market demands and customer needs which enhance competitive advantage and organizational performance. However medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Kenya have encountered significant challenges in coping with changing business environment and customer needs. These challenges are a major hindrance to the attainment of sustainable performance. It is against this background that the researcher assessed the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The study was guided by delta model theory and descriptive research design was employed. The target population was the 49 medium-sized food manufacturing firms operating in Nairobi County. Managers of the aforementioned firms were the unit of observation. Census design was adopted since the population was very small and all the 49 managers were included in the study. A structured questionnaire was used in data collection of the primary data. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied in data analysis. According the descriptive data analysis, it was observed that entrepreneurial orientation dimension influenced the performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. Correlation analysis results established that entrepreneurial orientation dimension ($r=0.734^{**}$) had a significant relationship with performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. Therefore, it influenced organizational performance positively. In regression analysis, the coefficient of determination ($R^2=0.539$) implying that entrepreneurial orientation dimension explained 53.9% of the organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The study concludes that the adoption of entrepreneurial orientation enable a firm to anticipate and plan for future opportunities rather than over relying on the existing products, services and processes. The study recommends that medium-sized food manufacturing firms should create a conducive environment that encourages creativity and new ideas. They should also focus the entrepreneurial orientation towards re-establishing the fundamental set of relationships with the business environment. This will help them to react effectively to the new opportunities and changes. The study will provide important information on dimensions of strategic orientation which will help food manufacturing medium-sized firms to make informed choices and enhance performance. Additionally, the findings of the study will be of significant importance in the formulation of policy framework for the medium-sized food manufacturing firms.*

Key Words: *Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension, Organizational Performance, Food Manufacturing Medium-sized firms*

1. Introduction

Strategic orientation determine the efficiency of the business firms and their survival in the long-term (Harun, Sikalieh, & Mosoti, 2021). It further provides mechanisms of making strategic decisions, effective allocation of resources, alignment of employee efforts and performance measurement. Entrepreneurial orientation dimension in particular, incorporates the proactive decision-making practices regarding the risk-taking and the processes of exploiting market opportunities (Obradovic & Obradovic, 2016). Therefore, food manufacturing firms adopt this dimension of strategic orientation to take considerable risks in their product and market strategies. The plethora of environmental changes demand responsiveness from medium-sized firms in the food manufacturing sector, and which in turn exerts pressure on the available limited resources (Singh, Del-Giudice, Chiappetta-Jabbour, Latan, & Sohal, 2022). Some of the macro environmental forces that medium-sized food manufacturing firms have to grapple with include the stretching the level of competition to the levels that some of these enterprises are unable to meet. Entrepreneurial-oriented manufacturing firms take risks and come up with proactive innovation that gives them a position of superiority in the market (Exposito & Sanchis-Llopis, 2018).

Food manufacturing as a key sector in Kenya contributes substantially to economic performance in terms of national output, exports and employment (Kaberia & Muathe, 2021). However, the organizational performance of manufacturing enterprises has been on decline. According to a report by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the sector's contribution to the GDP decreased from 9.3% in 2016 to 7.2% in 2021 (KNBS, 2022). This decline possibly indicates undesirable organizational performance among manufacturing firms in the Country. Moreover, the food manufacturing sub-sector, particularly, the medium-sized food manufacturing firms have also experienced poor performance in the same period. For instance, the value added in the food manufacturing sub-sector decreased from Kshs.3,054 million to Ksh.1,482 million between 2016-2019 (Nduati, 2020). Medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Kenya are grappling with a reduction in the value added among other challenges which poses significant threats to their sustainability. They have not been able to attain stable performance and this could be attributed to lack of adoption of appropriate dimension of entrepreneurial orientation.

Nevertheless, the dimension of entrepreneurial orientation has not been adequately addressed in the previous research works. For instance, Ichoroh (2021) researched on the effect of consumer orientation and competitor awareness on firm performance in the bottled water industry. The findings established that firm performance is dependent on the consumer orientation, market awareness and analysis. Similarly, Nduati (2020) examined the influence of strategic innovation on performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study concluded that performance depend on adoption of the strategic innovation. The study did not focus on dimension of entrepreneurial orientation. The current study evaluated the influence of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County.

2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.

3. Literature Review

Entrepreneurial orientation encompasses the multidimensional evaluation of organization's level entrepreneurship in terms of risk-taking, autonomy, pro-activeness and competitive responses (Akbar, Khan, Wadood, & Bon, 2020). This orientation has become a central focus of the strategic management in medium-sized food manufacturing firms. Entrepreneurial orientation essentially incorporates tasks of varied dimensions and creative activities which are informed by management ability (Prifti & Alimehmeti, 2017). Therefore, it can be viewed from the aspects of entrepreneurship, the management decision making and practices. As a process of strategy- making, entrepreneurial orientation provide manufacturing medium-sized firms with a basis for entrepreneurial decisions and actions that determine the organizational performance (Li, 2022).

Entrepreneurial Orientation is anchored on dimensions which are adopted by medium-sized food manufacturing firms to enable them compete favorably (Exposito & Sanchis-Llopis, 2018). Competitive responses emulate the magnitude of the medium-sized food manufacturing firms' efforts to outdo the rivals which is demonstrated by reaction to their actions to achieve and improve the competitive position. This can take the form of direct or head-to-head competition such as market entry to face the competitors. Medium-sized food manufacturing firms can also respond to actions of the rivals like cutting of product prices to maintain market share (Nakku, Agbola, Miles, & Mahmood, 2020). Therefore, competitive response is an effective tool to cope with intense competition and help in protecting the competitive position in the market. The concept of Risk-taking has a direct link to entrepreneurship. The medium-sized firms that are entrepreneurially oriented are associated with risk-taking actions such as significant commitment of capital in the interests of achieving high returns by taking market opportunities (Prifti & Alimehmeti, 2017).

Autonomy in a firm expresses the decision making ability and action taking by individuals or a team associated with introducing new business concepts and actualizing them without management interruption (Al-Mamun & Fazal, 2018). Autonomy empowers medium-sized food manufacturing firms by flexibility to create implement entrepreneurial initiatives. In the context of entrepreneurial orientation, autonomy leverages the strengths of manufacturing medium-sized firms (Nakku et al., 2020). It is vital in the identification of opportunities which surpass existing capabilities hence support improvement of operations and business practices. Pro-activeness in the framework of entrepreneurial orientation involves the perspective of forward-looking and opportunity-seeking through establishing and launching new products in anticipation of demand in future (Prifti & Alimehmeti, 2017). This puts an enterprise ahead of the competitors and help to capitalize on market opportunities. Through pro-activeness dimension, medium-sized firms identify market opportunities and act on them to improve brand recognition and earn relatively higher profits (Exposito & Sanchis-Llopis, 2018).

Delta model theory as cited by Nkemchor and Ezeanolue (2021) describes the establishment of the product ideas which places the firm's mission statement at the center of strategic reasoning. This approach moves customers to the center stage and the competitors at the periphery. It explores the role of creativity in business strategy hence encourages curiosity and experimentation at every stage of the business operation. Ole Kulet, Wanyoike, and Koima (2019) applied the delta model theory in establishing the relationship between product strategic position and organizational performance in telecommunication industry. It was specifically used to describe the bond between organization and customers in terms of attraction and gratification of the customers. Medium-sized food manufacturing firms put efforts towards growth and development through adoption of strategies that contribute to increase in market share and profits (Bruijl & Gerard, 2018). The delta model is thus an applicable tool for firms which are at development stages. For enterprises that are revamping and fine-tuning their business models, delta model is the approach that can be adopted to effectively and systematically accomplish the task.

Delta model explains the cohesive set of outputs that bind the enterprise together in regard to its purpose and the overriding strategic plans meant to accomplish the mission and vision (Nkemchor & Ezeanolue, 2021). It provides important insights on how managers can seize the opportunity to develop viable strategy that increases the understanding of the internal and external business environments. This help firms to align their operations to the environmental changes and attain competitive advantage. The delta model applies to the current study as it focuses on the customer and the products that the medium-sized food manufacturing firms can establish and offer to fulfill the customers' needs. As such, the model explains the market orientation dimension variable which is all about customer centrality and satisfaction. According to Bruijl and Gerard (2018) the bond between the medium-sized food manufacturing firms is an important driving force which enable them to serve customers in a distinctive manner, leading to superior performance. Under the delta model, medium-sized food manufacturing firms can adopt distinctive strategic options comprising the system locked-in, comprehensive customer solutions and triangle method which are valuable in serving customers (Nkemchor & Ezeanolue, 2021). The delta model's focus is on revamping the business models which are facilitated by technological innovativeness that enable firms to take risks and seize opportunities. Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension is indicated by the aspects of risk taking, autonomy and pro-activeness. The conceptual framework illustrated on figure 1 shows the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation dimension and organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms.

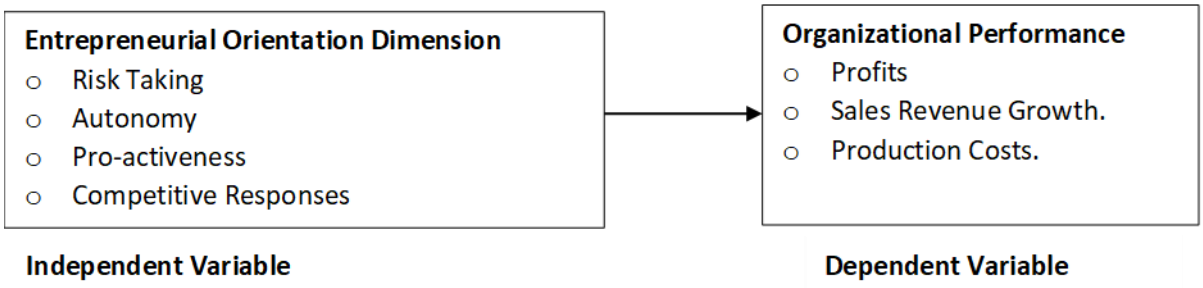

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical studies related to entrepreneurial orientation dimension have been reviewed. Al-Mamun and Fazal (2018) conducted a study on the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of micro-enterprises in Malaysia. Quantitative data was collected through structured interviews. The findings showed that proactiveness, autonomy and creativity in competition informed the entrepreneurial competencies. The entrepreneurial competencies had a positive effect on the performance of micro-enterprises performance. Baariu, Gathungu, and Ndemo (2021) undertook a study on the relationship between competitive strategy drivers and performance of manufacturing small and medium sized firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The results established that environmental based drivers, resource-based drivers and hybrid strategy had a positive relationship with performance of the Manufacturing SMEs in Nairobi County. In correlation analysis results, it was established that environmental based drives have a positive relationship (r=0.167*; p=0.005) with firm performance. The correlation coefficients for resource based drivers and hybrid strategy were (r= -0.273*; p=0.000) and (r= -0.187*; p=0.002) respectively. The results implies that those two predictor variables had negative effect on firm performance.

Ali, Abdullah, and Gorondutse (2017) examined the effect of entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, total quality management and organizational culture on the SMEs performance. The findings showed that the performance of small and medium enterprises is dependent on the effectiveness of entrepreneurial orientation. Akbar, Khan, Wadood, and Bon (2020) examined the effects of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on firm performance in Malaysian furniture industry. The researchers adopted quantitative research method and collected data through a questionnaire. The findings established that autonomy, pro-activeness and aggressiveness elements of entrepreneurial orientation affect firm performance to a large extent. Nyachanchu, Chepkwony, and Bonuke (2017) researched on the role of dynamic capabilities in the performance of manufacturing firms in Nairobi County. Results revealed that sensing capabilities (β=0.215, P<0.01), seizing capabilities (β=0.194, P<0.01) and reconfiguration capabilities (β=0.182, P<0.001) had a positive relationship with firm performance. They accounted for 25.9% of the variation in firm performance among manufacturing firms.

Significant gaps were identified from the empirical studies. Baariu et al (2021) found that environmental based drivers, resource-based drivers and hybrid strategy positively affect the performance of the Manufacturing SMEs. The research focused on competitive drivers as opposed to dimensions of strategy orientation. Akbar et al (2020) revealed that entrepreneurial orientation affect firm performance. However, the study was undertaken from furniture companies as opposed to food manufacturing small and medium enterprises. Moreover, Nyachanchu et al focused on dynamic capabilities particularly, the sensing, seizing, and reconfiguration capabilities and they were not clearly linked to entrepreneurial orientation. The current study has evaluated the influence of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms.

4. Methodology

The current study employed descriptive research design. This research design enabled the researcher led to an in-depth understanding of the entrepreneurial orientation dimension and organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The target population was the 49 medium-sized food manufacturing firms operating in Nairobi County. Managers of the aforementioned firms were the unit of observation. Census design was employed and the researcher involved a manager from each of the 49 medium-sized food manufacturing firms. A structured questionnaire was used in data collection. Descriptive statistical analysis technique was adopted and percentages, means and standard deviations were used to summarize data in form of tables. Moreover, inferential statistical analysis technique was applied. This technique used Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis to establish relationship between variables, make predictions and conclusions. The regression model that was applied was as;

$Y = \beta_0+\beta_1X_1+\varepsilon$

Where;

Y = Organizational Performance

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Beta coefficient

X_1 = Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension

ε = Error term

5. Findings and Discussions

This section outlines the descriptive and inferential findings and discussions on the influence of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The researcher issued 49 questionnaires to the managers where 37 were fully filled and returned. The response rate was 75.5% and adequate for the study.

5.1 Descriptive Findings and Discussions

The study sought to determine the influence of entrepreneurial orientation dimension on organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The findings are illustrated on Table 1.

Table 1: Influence of Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension on Organizational Performance of Medium-sized Food Manufacturing Firms

Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension	N	SA 5	A 4	I 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Std. Dev
Entrepreneurial orientation create value for customers.	37	48.6%	40.5%	8.1%	2.7%	0%	4.35	0.753
Risk-taking actions enable firms to seize market opportunities.	37	29.7%	54.1%	16.2%	0%	0%	4.14	0.673
Autonomy enhance productivity in food manufacturing medium-sized firms.	37	24.3%	24.3%	45.9%	2.7%	2.7%	3.65	0.978
Pro-activeness allow food manufacturing medium-sized firms to continually make changes to business models.	37	29.7%	51.4%	10.8%	8.1%	0%	4.03	0.866
Competitive responses strengthens our market positioning.	37	45.9%	37.8%	13.5%	2.7%	0%	4.24	0.895

In accordance with the findings presented in Table 1, it was revealed that 48.6 % of the managers strongly agreed and 40.5% also concurred thus 89.1% at least agreed (Mean = 4.35; Std. Dev. =0.753) that entrepreneurial orientation create value for customers. 54.1% of the managers agreed (Mean=4.14; Std. Dev.= 0.673) that risk-taking actions enable firms to seize market opportunities. However, the respondents had indifferent views (Mean=3.65; Std. Dev.=0.978) on influence of autonomy on productivity in medium-sized food manufacturing firms. Majority of the respondents agreed (Mean=4.03; Std. Dev.=0.866) that pro-activeness allow medium-sized food manufacturing firms to continually make changes to business models. The managers of medium-sized food manufacturing firms also agreed (Mean=4.24; Std. Dev.=0.895) that competitive responses strengthens their market positioning. The findings relates to Ali, Abdullah, and Gorondutse (2017) on the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. The findings revealed that the organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms is dependent on the effectiveness of entrepreneurial orientation.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Performance of Medium-sized Food Manufacturing Firms

Organizational Performance	N	SA 5	A 4	I 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Std. Dev
Our profits have been on upward trends for the past five years.	37	48.6%	37.8%	8.1%	5.4%	0%	4.30	0.845
Our sales revenue growth has increased for the past five years.	37	35.1%	54.1%	10.8%	0%	0%	4.24	0.641
Our production processes are efficient.	37	54.1%	32.4%	10.8%	2.7%	0%	4.38	0.794
Our production costs are sustainable.	37	59.5%	32.4%	5.4%	0%	0%	4.46	0.836
We maintain adequate capacity utilization rate.	37	48.6%	37.8%	13.5%	0%	0%	4.35	0.716

Descriptive findings shows that 86.4% of the respondents at least agreed (Mean=4.30; Std. Dev.=0.845) that the profits of their respective medium-sized food manufacturing firms' have been on upward trends for the past five years. They also concurred (Mean=4.24; Std. Dev.=0.641) that sales revenue growth has increased for the past five years. Further, 54.1% of

the strongly admitted (Mean=4.38; Std. Dev.=0.794) that their medium-sized food manufacturing firms' production processes are efficient. The managers of medium-sized food manufacturing firms strongly agreed (Mean=4.46; Std. Dev.=0.836) that their production costs are sustainable. Overall, the findings revealed that organizational performance is dependent on the adoption of entrepreneurial orientation dimension.

5.2 Correlation Analysis Findings and Discussions

Correlation analysis was undertaken to establish the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation dimension and organizational performance. Results are illustrated on Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension and Organizational Performance

		Organizational Performance
Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension	Pearson Correlation	.734**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	37

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings on Table 3 revealed that the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation dimension and organizational performance was positive and strong (r = 0.734**) and statistically significant (p = 0.000) at 1% significance level. This mean that risk-taking, pro-activeness, and competitive responses as key indicators of entrepreneurial orientation dimension influenced organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County.

4.5.2 Findings and Discussions of Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was carried out to predict variation of organizational performance from changes in entrepreneurial orientation dimension. The results are presented through model summary, ANOVA and coefficients in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.734[a]	.539	.526	.25887

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension

The model summary illustrated on Table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient (R=0.734) shows that there existed strong relationship between entrepreneurial orientation dimension and organizational performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2=0.539) indicated that entrepreneurial orientation dimension accounts for 53.9% of variation in organizational performance. The result implies that entrepreneurial orientation dimension influenced organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County.

Table 5: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.746	1	2.746	40.982	.000[b]
	Residual	2.346	35	.067		
	Total	5.092	36			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Table 5 shows that the F-value was 40.982 with p-value = 0.000. The result means that the overall model was significant. This means that aspects of entrepreneurial orientation dimension comprising risk taking, autonomy, and pro-activeness influenced organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.729	.411		4.205	.000
Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension	.641	.100	.734	6.402	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

The study applied this regression model;
$Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$
Where;
Y= Organizational Performance
β_0 = Constant
β_1= Beta Coefficient
X_1 = Entrepreneurial Orientation Dimension
ε = Error of Margin

The regression model was interpreted as; $Y = 1.729 + 0.641X_1 + 0.411$. The regression results reveals that one unit change in entrepreneurial orientation dimension leads to 0.641 unit change in organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms. This implies that organizational performance is predictable from changes in depend on entrepreneurial orientation dimension. Therefore, risk taking, autonomy, and pro-activeness elements influence organizational performance of medium-sized food manufacturing firms in Nairobi County.

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that entrepreneurial orientation dimension exploits opportunities and enable firms to respond to the changes in the business environment. The inability of firms to attain desirable performance could be attributed to overreliance on existing products. The study revealed that adoption of pro-activeness aspect of entrepreneurial orientation enables a firm to anticipate and plan for future opportunities rather than over relying on the existing products, services and processes. Entrepreneurial orientation dimension encourages and guide on risk-taking among food manufacturing enterprises. The aspect of risk taking include investment in diversified products, use of advanced technology and production methods to increase the production outputs to increase revenue and profits. It was established that autonomy under entrepreneurial orientation encourage new ideas that are critical in improving productivity and performance of the organization. A competitive response counters the actions of the competitors. This is achieved by seizing market opportunities in regard to establishing and offering new products that give customers better value than the competitors, leading to increased capacity utilization rate and improved organizational performance.

7. Recommendation

The study recommends that medium-sized food manufacturing firms should create a conducive environment that encourages creativity and new ideas. They should also focus the entrepreneurial orientation towards re-establishing the fundamental set of relationships with the business environment. This will help them to react effectively to the new opportunities and changes. It will also instill the right entrepreneurial skills and sustain operations and growth.

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