

ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AS A STRATEGIC DRIVER OF SME INTERNATIONALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) has emerged as a pivotal construct in explaining how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) navigate competitive global markets. This study examines the role of EO dimensions—innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking—in accelerating SME internationalization. Drawing upon strategic management theory and international entrepreneurship literature, the article explores how firms with strong EO profiles leverage opportunity recognition and resource mobilization to expand across borders. The analysis highlights how EO fosters adaptability, innovation-driven competitiveness, and early international entry. The findings suggest that SMEs exhibiting higher EO are more resilient in uncertain foreign markets and demonstrate superior performance outcomes. This research contributes to understanding EO as both a behavioral and strategic mechanism shaping global expansion..

Keywords: E-commerce, trust, data privacy, Jumia Kenya, Entrepreneurial Orientation, SMEs, Internationalization, Innovation, Risk-taking, Proactiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial Orientation has gained significant scholarly attention as a determinant of firm performance and strategic positioning. In the context of globalization, SMEs increasingly face the challenge of expanding beyond domestic markets while managing resource constraints. EO represents a firm-level strategic posture characterized by innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking, which collectively shape how organizations identify and exploit emerging opportunities. Firms with strong EO tend to pioneer new markets, introduce novel products, and commit resources despite uncertainty. In international markets, where institutional differences and competitive pressures are high, EO becomes particularly critical. The integration of EO into internationalization strategy enables firms to anticipate market shifts and capitalize on global opportunities before competitors. By embedding entrepreneurial behavior within organizational culture, SMEs enhance their capacity to adapt to foreign market complexities.

CONCLUSIONS

Entrepreneurial Orientation plays a transformative role in SME internationalization by enhancing opportunity recognition, strategic agility, and competitive positioning. Firms that cultivate innovativeness, proactiveness, and calculated risk-taking are better equipped to overcome barriers in foreign markets. The study underscores the importance of embedding EO within organizational culture to sustain international growth and long-term performance.

Transparency and policies regarding data privacy are crucial for maintaining trust, and Jumia Kenya's practices align with these theoretical insights. The clear communication of privacy policies and transparent data handling practices, as evidenced in both the literature and the case study, is essential for building and sustaining consumer trust. By adhering to these principles, Jumia Kenya ensures that users feel secure and informed about how their data is being managed, reinforcing the overall trust in the platform.

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