



International Entrepreneurial Culture in the Tunisian Context

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Abstract

The increasing internationalization of companies has led us to reflect on the structuring of an emerging field of research, namely international entrepreneurial culture (IEC). Moreover, the absence of a solid theoretical framework is one of the main factors contributing to the scattered nature of research in this field, which has led us to conduct further research on international entrepreneurial culture. After presenting the definition and dimensions of IEC, this study aims to analyze and synthesize previous empirical findings on this phenomenon to understand its causes and influencing factors, behaviors, and processes in the global context in which it is embedded. Following this study in the Tunisian context, we found that Tunisian companies have no intention of embracing the phenomenon of international entrepreneurial culture. The absence of an organizational culture, whether among managers or members of the organization, has a major effect on the entrenchment of an international entrepreneurial culture. Thus, international trade is a real motivator for Tunisian companies to embark on internationalization. In this respect, we propose some avenues of research to consolidate and develop the field of international entrepreneurial culture.

Keywords *International Entrepreneurship, Organizational Culture, International Trade, International Entrepreneurial Culture*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, entrepreneurship and international trade have attracted extensive interest (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). Internationalization and entrepreneurship are related because entering and venturing into foreign markets are considered entrepreneurial practices for the firm (Zahra et al., 2001). Nowadays, organizations operate in a turbulent competitive, legislative, and technological environment that requires a combination of internationalization and innovation (Denicolai et al., 2014). However, the term international entrepreneurship (IE) is frequently used in different cases if it can create confusion between its nature and application. McDougall's (1989) study reveals that IE can only be examined in firms created across borders.

Zahra and George (2002) defined IE as a process in which an organization discovers and exploits opportunities in the international market. Indeed, following recent studies, we can assume that IE can be applied to any company of any age or size. Moreover, the entrepreneurial activities of a firm are closely related to its organizational culture (Zahra et al., 2001). By identifying an international entrepreneurial culture (IEC) and exploring its six dimensions, we provide aspects of a framework that encompasses the construction of IE using concepts from organizational theory studies. To this end, we used ideas from IE, entrepreneurship, and international business literature. The remainder of the article is structured as follows. First, we provide a broader definition of IE, then we present the six dimensions of IEC and explain the concepts of organizational culture and international trade due to their considerable effect on IEC. Finally, we outline the methodology used. In conclusion, we present a summary, recommend Tunisian firms to act more on weakly significant dimensions to maximize their IEC, and propose directions for future research.

The objective of our study is to determine whether Tunisian managers are interested in international entrepreneurial culture, its effect, and the handicaps faced to succeed in rooting

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international entrepreneurial culture as an organizational culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of international entrepreneurship

IE is an organization-wide process embedded in organizational culture that seeks to generate value by taking advantage of opportunities in the global marketplace. The notion of opportunity is paramount in entrepreneurship (Short et al., 2010) and international management (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005), with the former focusing on pursuing one opportunity and the latter analyzing multiple opportunities (Reuber et al., 2018). Finally, substantial importance is given to organizations' opportunities, decision-making, and development procedures. After the 2000s, the evolution of IE definitions has allowed it to distinguish itself from its parent disciplines. Some scholars have questioned whether IE is a research field (Jones et al., 2015; Servantie et al., 2016). IE is an organization-wide phenomenon, not an individual event of an entrepreneur.

IE is a process that adopts dynamic and evolutionary development and whose final products can take a long time to materialize. Thus, to succeed in such a process, it is essential to allocate substantial resources (Mackenzie, 2000) and reserve a long-term duration to achieve the desired results. In addition, Buccieri et al. (2020) indicated that an IEC is of great importance in developing ambidextrous innovation in a dynamic environment.

To understand the concept of IE, it is necessary to examine the organizational context in which it is embedded. Indeed, the firm's organizational culture may be a critical contextual factor affecting the firm's response to international entrepreneurial motivations (Liesch & Knight, 1999). In addition, all entrepreneurial activity is considered organizational behavior and can be influenced by the organization's cultural fabric (Meyer, 1982). The concept of opportunity exploitation is central to entrepreneurship research. However, Reuber et al. (2018) suggest that the entrepreneur must pay attention and deploy a research process to identify international opportunities.

Dimensions of international entrepreneurial culture

The six dimensions of IEC can be manifested in several material and cognitive elements of organizational culture (Lytle et al., 1995). Indeed, the dimensions of organizational culture and IEC may overlap (Peters and Waterman, 1982) and can also support and interact with each other (Lytle et al., 1995). Table 1 summarizes the main corresponding references in organization theory, IE, entrepreneurship, and international business literature for each IEC dimension.

Table 1. Key references on IEC dimensions

Dimensions of the IEC	Key references in organizational theory literature	Key references in the IE and entrepreneurship literature	Key references in international business literature
International market orientation	Hurley and Hult (1998)	McDougall and Oviatt (2000), Zahra and Garvis (2000)	Cadogan et al. (1999)
International learning orientation	Moorman (1995), Nevis et al. (1995)	Autio et al. (2000), Minniti and Bygrave (2001)	Barkema and Vermueien (1998)
International innovation propensity	Kitchell (1995)	McDougall and Oviatt (2000), Zahra and Garvis (2000)	Bartlett and Ghoshal (1990), Hitt et al. (1997)

International risk attitude	Hofstede (1991), Sitkin and Pablo (1992)	McDougall and Oviatt (2000), Zahra and Garvis (2000)	McDougall (1989), Oviatt and McDougall (1997)
International networking orientation	Kilduff and Corley (2000), Powell et al. (1996)	Malecki (1997), Alvarez and Barney (2001)	Welch and Welch (1996)
International motivation	Detert et al. (2000)	Brown et al. (2001), Hornsby et al. (2002)	Birkinshaw (2000)

Source: Dimitratos and Plakoyiannaki (2003)

International market orientation

International market orientation refers to the posture and behavior that a firm can adopt to create superior value for its foreign customers (Murray et al., 2007). However, Knight and Kim (2009) assert that international business competence is based on organizational culture aspects, which is why market orientation has recently gained momentum in organizational theory. In the same vein, Chung (2012) asserts that international market orientation is part of organizational culture.

Other authors remarked that market orientation reflects a crucial characteristic not only in internationalization processes but also in international performance levels (Frösén et al. 2016; Acosta et al., 2018). Thus, market orientation can generate a sustainable competitive advantage (Papadas et al., 2019; Tho, 2019). Market-oriented firms may reduce transaction costs from entering culturally distant markets by reducing information asymmetries and opportunistic behaviors while successfully containing risks and uncertainties (Fernandes et al., 2020). Furthermore, Gillespie et al. (2008) showed that organizational culture measures were significantly related to customer satisfaction. Finally, companies must take advantage of resources and explore and exploit opportunities abroad to achieve superior performance (Teece, 2016).

International Learning Orientation

International learning orientation refers to a firm's propensity to actively obtain and use foreign market information to its advantage (Moorman, 1995). Previous studies indicate that international learning and international market orientation are closely connected and may overlap (Cadogan et al., 1999).

Blount (1974) supports the idea that organizational culture consists of how people structure their experiential knowledge. Bertels and Savage (1999) argued that learning values must be instilled in organizational culture to succeed in the marketplace.

Older firms and foreign-born organizations can overcome barriers to learning that impede their ability to adapt and grow in new environments (Autio et al., 2000). In the same vein, the internal organization of learning is vital to cope with dynamic changes in the environment. Furthermore, when a firm seeks to foster entrepreneurship as it expands globally, it must maximize knowledge and learning flows across its different countries (Ireland et al., 2001). However, Moen et al. (2015) suggest that new firms created in emerging economies have stronger learning motivation but higher failure rates.

Propensity for International Innovation

Innovation is an organizational approach that refers to the implementation of new ideas that lead to product and service innovation (Vila-Lopez & White, 2018). Likewise, Saudi et al. (2019)

suggest that internationalization is a driving force for firms to learn and implement innovations. In addition, a culture that emphasizes opportunity-seeking affects firm innovation (Baker & Sinkula, 2009).

As organizational innovation is currently one of the most significant sources of increased competitiveness for organizations (Honyenuga et al., 2019), innovative behavior is crucial for sustainability (Lin et al., 2018). Moreover, Bucciari et al. (2020) and Fernández (2023) revealed that there is a close relationship between innovation and international trade. International innovation propensity strengthens the firm's IE (Styles & Genua, 2008). Finally, at the international market level, the firm's innovation propensity is positively related to its expansion into foreign markets (Hitt et al., 1997).

International Attitude Toward Risk

International risk attitude refers to the degree to which a firm is willing to undertake significant and risky resource commitments in foreign markets (Miller & Friesen, 1978). Zahra (1993) suggested that studying the nature and outcomes of risk-taking behavior in international operations, including new international companies and those already established in foreign markets, should be incorporated into the definition of IE.

International entrepreneurial firms are characterized by risk-taking behavior, such as incurring large amounts of debt to exploit opportunities in the international market (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). However, an organization's ability to assume risk is largely attributed to the characteristics of organizational culture and plays a vital role in its survival in turbulent environments (Hofstede, 1991). In IE and entrepreneurship, risk attitude is conceptualized by the firm's tendency to favor low-risk projects over high-risk ones (Khandwalla, 1977). Generally, entrepreneurial ventures are characterized by taking a significant degree of personal, social, psychological, and financial risk (Baird & Thomas, 1985). Lumpkin and Dess (1996) stated that risk-taking propensity and its effects vary at organizational and structural levels because of organizational goals and objectives.

International Network Orientation

International network orientation refers to the extent to which a firm obtains resources from the environment through alliance building and social integration for use in its operations in foreign markets (Gulati, 1998). Networking orientation is an essential part of organizational culture (Powell et al., 1996). Identifying and appreciating the system of relationships provides a deeper insight into corporate culture because it enables us to understand the structures that support and renew organizational assumptions and values (Kilduff & Corley, 2000).

Research on IE, incorporating the network dimension, seems limited to firms born across borders, which use alliances to overcome resource constraints as they internationalize (Madsen & Servais, 1997). Indeed, networking has received considerable attention in the international business literature. According to network theory (Welch and Welch, 1996), a firm engages in partnerships involving organizations in the home country and foreign countries. With the experience the firm gains in the international market, the network relationships facilitate the firm's development and lead to increased resource commitments in foreign markets. Finally, networking affects the development and exploitation of opportunities in international firms and increases international performance (Kontinen & Ojala, 2012).

International Motivation

International motivation is the process of initiating, directing, and energizing the human behavior of organizational members for firms operating in foreign markets (Geen & Shea, 1997).

Motivation deals with the incentives and rewards that should be offered to participants in the organization to make them act toward the desired performance (Detert et al., 2000). International motivation is an integral part of organizational culture, as a participatory culture in an internationalized firm reinforces administrative change (Zhou et al., 2006). In addition, managerial values and practices permeate organizational culture (Van Der Berg & Wilderom, 2004).

Organizational culture values and norms are the foundations of motivation that relate to broad goals, provide attractive alternatives for action, and influence the initiation and direction of behavior (Schwartz, 1997); therefore, OC, which is manifested in the perceptions and practices of organizational members, can influence firm responses to entrepreneurial opportunities abroad (Hofstede et al., 1990). In the field of IE, studies of foreign-founded firms suggest that possessing an international vision is imperative for managers and employees to simultaneously compete effectively abroad (Madsen & Servais, 1997).

Concept of Organizational Culture

Although organizational culture plays a crucial role in understanding how an organization operates, researchers could not reach a consensus regarding its importance. Organizational culture is related to the behavior of individuals working in the organization and their interactions within the organization (Tseng, 2015). Studies provide solid knowledge about the cultural perspective in organizations, hence the importance of seeing how different organizational cultures help them develop differently (Berson et al., 2008). Generally, organizational culture refers to organizations’ actions, procedures, and protocols (Knight & Kim, 2009).

We chose to identify organizational culture as a model of cultural dynamics because such an approach shifts the focus and understanding from a static perspective to a procedural one, which has been influential in the field (Tsoukas & Hatch, 2001). In addition, the concept of culture in international trade primarily refers to national culture and represents a paradoxical amalgam of organizational, societal, and national traits that may change from country to country (Thomas & Mueller, 2000).

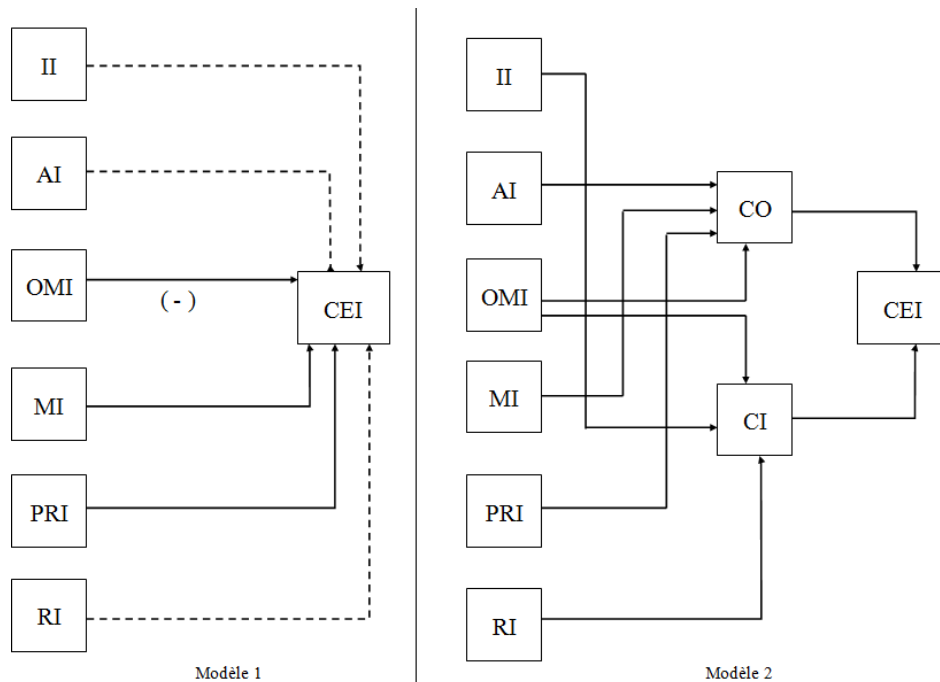


Figure 1. Conceptual models

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and data

The questionnaire is the most widely used data collection method in management science research (Evrard et al., 2009); therefore, the data were collected through questionnaires sent either by email or door-to-door. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts. The first included ten descriptive questions related to the characteristics of the company and its manager. The second part included 36 items related to the measurement of the six IEC dimensions and eight items related to organizational culture and international trade (4 items each). The questionnaire items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale with the interpretation, strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, somewhat agree=3, agree=4, and strongly agree=5.

The targeted entities were young national ones (date of creation ≤ 10 years), acting in different sectors (industrial, commercial, services, and agricultural), and spread over 20 Tunisian governorates. In addition, we insisted that the questionnaires must be answered by managers or owners who are less than 50 years. However, we received only 163 duly completed and valid questionnaires among the 278 distributed ones, hence a response rate of (58.63%).

Steps of the factorial analysis

Principal component analysis (PCA) is a factor analysis method that facilitates the interpretation of selected factor structures. Before implementing a PCA, we had to ensure that the data could be factorized. Several statistical criteria must be verified. First, PCA imposes a normal distribution of items. Two coefficients, the symmetry coefficient (Skewness) and the kurtosis coefficient (Kurtosis), must be examined. Then, Bartlett's test is used to test the null hypothesis (H_0), i.e., the independence between the items. The rejection of this hypothesis at a significance level $< 5\%$ indicates that the items are correlated and statistically significant. In addition, the Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin (KMO) test was used to assess the quality of partial correlations between items to search for common dimensions. In addition, the percentage of variance explained must be greater than 50%. In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficient evaluates the correlations between the items of a measurement scale.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After performing PCA, we used the multiple linear regression method for the two conceptual models to obtain results using SPSS 23 software. Indeed, our objective was to determine the significant IEC dimensions for the Tunisian context for Model 1 (Table 2). For the second model, we introduced two moderating variables, organizational culture and international trade, to examine the behavior of the dimensions mentioned: those significant in Model 1 and those that are not (Table 3). To this end, there were two approximations using two regression equations, one for Model 1 and the second for Model 2.

Equations and results

The abbreviations used are as follows:

II = International Innovation; IMO= International Market Orientation; IL= International Learning; IRT= International Risk Taking; IM= International Motivation; IN= International Network; OC= Organizational Culture; IT= International Trade; and IEC= International Entrepreneurial Culture.

Model 1 equation:

$$IEC_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 IL + \beta_2 II + \beta_3 IMO + \beta_4 IM + \beta_5 IRT + \beta_6 IN + e_i$$

Model 2 equation:

$$IEC_j = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 IL - OC + \alpha_2 IL - IT + \alpha_3 II - OC + \alpha_4 II - IT + \alpha_5 IRT - OC + \alpha_6 IRT - IT + \alpha_7 IMO - OC + \alpha_8 IMO - IT + \alpha_9 IM - OC + \alpha_{10} IM - IT + \alpha_{11} IN - OC + \alpha_{12} IN - IT + \alpha_{13} OC - IEC + \alpha_{14} IT - IEC + \varepsilon_j$$

IL-OC: For each pair of variables in Model 2, we used PCA to obtain the eigenvector, from which we determined the IL-OC variable. The same applies to the other explanatory variables in Model 2.

Table 2. Results of the analysis for Model 1

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1 (constant)	.016	.077		.213	.832		
IL	.016	.078	.016	.207	.836	.979	1.022
IT	-.014	.077	-.014	-.179	.858	.982	1.018
IMO	-.190	.080	-.191	2.385	.018	.910	1.099
IM	.219	.079	.224	2.788	.003	.904	1.106
IRT	.133	.075	.136	1.766	.004	.980	1.020
IN	.117	.074	.123	1.577	.117	.966	1.035

Table 3. Results of the analysis for Model 2

Model 2	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1 (constant)	.019	.091		.164	.87		
IL-OC	.132	.078	.223	1.748	.02	.980	1.199
II-OC	-.035	.079	-.035	-.444	.657	0.907	1.102
IMO-OC	.148	.087	.156	1.775	.01	.911	1.446
IM-OC	.126	.083	.129	1.692	.04	.904	1.078
IRT-OC	.153	.086	.151	1.814	.01	.709	1.108

IN-OC	.057	.082	.080	.703	.483	.435	2.298
IL-IT	-.051	.084	-.051	-.608	.544	.806	1.241
II-IT	.175	.088	.132	1.789	.02	.812	1.092
IMO-IT	.142	.077	.121	1.831	.01	.889	1.472
IM-IT	-.013	.069	-.018	-.018	.847	.666	1.501
IRT-IT	.105	.109	.086	.963	.337	.704	1.421
IN-IT	.138	.051	.158	2.053	.01	.907	1.938
OC-IEC	.176	.085	.194	2.071	.00	.942	1.561
IT-IEC	.187	.077	.188	1.986	.02	.821	1.382

In general, a VIF<4 and a tolerance > 0.25 means that models 1 and 2 do not have a multicollinearity problem.

Discussions

In Model 1, international learning and international innovation are two insignificant variables. Indeed, our sample consisted of 163 Tunisian firms ≤ 10 years; thus, they have no history in international work; these companies find it hard to overcome learning, which requires exploration in the early phases and exploitation of knowledge in later ones. In addition, cultural factors, including collective and hierarchical aspects, hamper internationalization because they affect the behavior of managers dictated by traditional business methods (Tovstiga et al., 2004).

In addition, Tunisian firms find it challenging to acquire different skills and knowledge based on past and current successful experiences. Such experiential knowledge can minimize perceived uncertainty abroad, which in turn leads to significant commitments to international markets and makes it possible to detect opportunities. However, Tunisian companies need to focus more on international learning to perceive IEC. Also, international innovation is non-significant. The propensity for international innovation is closely related to orientation toward international learning. However, learning is antecedent to innovation in international markets (Hurley & Hurt, 1998). In addition, an organization with an innovative position abroad must be able to learn from its inclusion in new and creative processes (Argyris and Schön, 1996).

Indeed, international learning is an insignificant variable; thus, innovation is systematically a non-significant variable. International innovation can only exist after exploring available opportunities beyond borders. Accordingly, for Tunisian companies, innovation requires significant financial astuteness and high-level skills. These two factors are vital when the organization is in fierce competition at the international level, hence the need for the ability to innovate as it is a factor of performance and success at the international level. Moreover, in emerging economies such as Tunisia, the relationship between firm-specific ownership advantages and foreign investment is moderated by the intensity of competition, innovation, firm creation, strategic renewal, and exporting (Yiu et al., 2007).

For international risk-taking, Tunisian business leaders can take well-calculated and intensely moderate risks. Indeed, Tunisian managers are used to turbulent environments, especially after the 2011 revolution and the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Tunisian companies suggest that tacit knowledge of the complexity of products or services and vision are the factors

that count in the decision to internationalize, even if they do not perfectly know the environment where they want to operate because small companies are more dependent on their geographical environment than large ones when they engage in foreign markets. However, they also suggest, as [Evangelista \(2005\)](#), that the government must put in place measures that enhance the value of foreign expansion, mainly on the financial side, which is the major problem of Tunisian entities given the fragility of their financial situation.

Tunisian managers recognize the importance of international market orientation (IMO). According to the first model, this variable is negative and significant. Indeed, Tunisian business leaders have problems knowing the exact needs of foreign markets and acquiring information about the specificity of international markets, their level of consumption, and their price level, which require considerable time and money. Moreover, entrepreneurs are afraid of competitive orientation in international markets. Furthermore, Tunisia does not have enough organizations of accompaniment and guidance that can help, in one way or another, Tunisian organizations prospect some foreign markets or establish themselves in cross-border countries.

Regarding international motivation, Tunisian managers have significant and strong motivation. In addition, business leaders believe that the Tunisian market is unstable and too small. However, Tunisian companies are deeply interested in closer markets geographically, culturally, and professionally to minimize the risks of internationalization and the markets of Black Africa, which they find quite important.

In Model 1, an international network is a non-significant dimension. Indeed (Table 2), Tunisian managers announce that this concept does not pose a problem for entities born beyond the borders because they use alliances to overcome the constraints of resources. In addition, for Tunisian companies, the international network is a result, the most important is to acquire experience in the market, and therefore, the company can easily have relationships that will develop the activities of the company and lead to increased commitments of resources on external markets, which agrees with [Young et al. \(2003\)](#).

In Model 2, two moderating variables, organizational culture and international trade, were used to obtain more relevant results. The choice of these two variables was not arbitrary but was based on the literature ([Dimitratos & Plakoyannaki, 2003](#)). Indeed, IE can only exist in the presence of a culture within the organization whose management team members are united by the same values, beliefs, and objectives. The results of Model 2 prove that organizational culture and international trade have a positive and significant effect on IEC (Table 3).

In Model 2, international innovation does not influence organizational culture and international trade: Tunisian firms prefer internationalization through their products without any change. The hierarchical culture that characterizes Tunisian organizations hinders innovative behavior considerably. Moreover, a commitment to innovation requires skills and money. Such a commitment carries a high risk; thus, Tunisian managers are shifting to open innovation, which is characterized by its easy accessibility for all SMEs and a moderately acceptable cost. In addition, international trade pushes Tunisian organizations to be more innovative because exposure to new international opportunities strengthens their innovation capacity and facilitates, for Tunisian companies, the transfer of technology to expand further on the international market with new products and intensively develop the international network.

International learning, international market orientation, international motivation, and international risk-taking are strongly linked to organizational culture. However, Tunisian managers have a culture of learning to perform better: they announce that they always need to learn to develop. Indeed, an entry into international markets requires a culture that promotes the effort of learning in foreign and domestic markets, as claimed by [Sapienza and William \(2005\)](#); thus, learning is a culture for the manager, which is remarkable in our study, especially because all

respondents have an age ≤ 50 years and the majority have a university level. Therefore, the intellectual level plays a central role in developing the culture of the entity's owner. Similarly, Tunisian business leaders suggest that risk-taking is constantly persistent in the business field; as a result, entry into business automatically means taking a risk that can never be neutralized but must be well-calculated and moderated.

Tunisian companies are interested in international market orientation, and the dimensions of customer and competitor orientation dominate their vision of foreign markets. Due to a lack of readiness for globalization and economic liberalization, managers of Tunisian organizations always look for external partners to exchange their resources and gain a competitive advantage in the market.

Furthermore, the dominant hierarchical culture is centered on the decision-maker manager; then, it does not benefit from any organizational support and must rely on its efforts and knowledge while relying on external partners, which are usually specialized consulting firms or organizations and economic associations, such as the Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce, and Handicrafts (UTICA), Young Leaders Centre (CJD), Tunisia - Africa Business Council (TABC), Confederation of Citizen Enterprises of Tunisia (CONNECT), Young Economic room (JCE), and Arab Institute of Business Leaders (IACE).

The results show that international market orientation is strongly linked to international trade. Indeed, for Tunisian organizations, the practice of international trade and its success are exclusively related to the international market orientation, regardless of the company's activity (import or export).

International motivation is a culture for Tunisian entrepreneurs who are very motivated to internationalize but do not have involving their staff, except the directors within the company. Indeed, the function of motivation for the Tunisian case consists of disseminating and using information collected by the head of the company through external channels without activating the behavior of employees toward projects abroad. This behavior is logical for two reasons: first, Tunisian companies favor results-oriented philosophy in their structures and have hierarchical organizational culture. Second, most Tunisian companies have the family form; therefore, the dimension of international motivation is critical to success in IE.

Our findings prove that international networking interacts with international trade. Indeed, Tunisian companies perceive and seize global opportunities through their network of contacts. In the Tunisian case, any development of activities in international trade needs to have a diversified and dense network of international contacts; therefore, the continuous research and evaluation of potential contacts develops over time and is formalized with experience.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we explored the concept of IE and suggested the dimensions of IEC. IE is viewed as a process within the organization embedded in the overall context of organizational culture, and in turn, OC is approached from a dynamic and processual perspective. Therefore, consistent with the arguments for expanding the field of IE and with the definitions of [McDougall and Oviatt \(2000\)](#) and [Zahra and George \(2002\)](#), we suggest a conceptualization of IE that can be applied to any firm regardless of its age or size. Moreover, it has been shown that IE evolves over a long-term horizon.

Nevertheless, the article sought to expand the literature in two ways. First, we suggest that research in the area of IE should examine the overall organizational context in which IE is embedded. Therefore, we posit that the construction of IE is an encompassing concept of the IEC. Second, we suggest that the research would capture the phenomenon of IE through six dimensions rather than the three sub-constructs that previous studies have used (Innovation, Taking Risk and

Proactivity) in international markets to measure IE. Thus, we can capture the six dimensions of IEC.

Here, we can conclude that the IEC is a dynamic and multidimensional concept, that OC is a fundamental factor in entrenching IEC within the company, and that IC is among the organizational factors that play a crucial role in reinforcing a strong IEC, which, in turn, offers superior performance. In addition, we can deduce that the Tunisian manager is the central and crucial node of the organization and, at the same time, an agent that can influence and affect the existing relationships while neglecting the initiatives of the company members. Moreover, the manager plays a leading role in developing an organizational culture within the entity. Indeed, the IEC enables Tunisian companies to take advantage of resources and the exploration and exploitation of opportunities discovered by entrepreneurs through different networks.

Indeed, the explanation of the international emergence and growth of organizations is focused on the prospects of resources and networks. Tunisian organizations encounter two significant challenges: the lack of a global vision among managers during the establishment of their businesses and financial difficulties. In addition, the study showed that the three causes of internationalization for Tunisian SMEs are the environment, the company, and the manager or owner. Finally, our goal was to develop a measurement instrument for the IEC that is more holistic and can be comprehensively measured. Although the factors used in our study were present in previous studies on IE and international trade in various ways, they have never been used together as a comprehensive measure of IEC. Consequently, the research can shift its focus from the concept of international entrepreneurship to a more encompassing measure, which is the IEC.

The IEC of small and young firms is not easily explained by a single theory because it is a broad and dynamic phenomenon that relies on multidisciplinary research (sociology, anthropology, marketing, international business, and psychology), including contributions from other fields of study, such as IE, OC, and strategy.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Our article affirms that international entrepreneurial culture is a dynamic activity, which is why we prefer to examine this phenomenon through a longitudinal study to find out how this phenomenon evolves. In addition, following technological developments, we believe, for the Tunisian case, it is necessary to include in the sample several service companies operating in the field of new technology; we will achieve better results because the skills of Tunisian companies in terms of information technology and artificial intelligence are recognized internationally, allowing them to internationalize more easily and more quickly while developing an organizational culture within the working group.

To improve the current studies, future research can do further exploration by learning about crucial issues, such as whether young SMEs can have an IEC. If the answer is positive, how can they acquire it? Otherwise, if the answer is negative, what will they have to eliminate or implement to have an IEC?

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