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THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION ON THE CORPORATE REPUTATION: A PROPOSITIONAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Building on Resource-Based View, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of organizational culture as a sub-dimension of organizational identity, Porter's competitive strategies (differentiation and cost leadership), and innovativeness as a sub-dimension of entrepreneurial orientation on corporate reputation. When we check the literature, we confront with lots of studies that investigate the relations among these concepts partially. However, we didn't find any studies that investigate the relations among these concepts by holistically. In other words, despite extensive research into the role played by organizational culture and corporate reputation management attaining inter-organizational advantage, the way in which these resources matter for generic strategies and innovativeness has received scant attention. This limitation constitutes the main motivation and original side of the study. In this respect, in this study, we try to fill the gap in the current literature by means of determining the organizational level antecedents of the corporate reputation. Moreover, we believe that addressing indirect relations will ease the nature of complex causal effects. Additionally, with this effort, we propose a conceptual model that further researches could empirically test it in a holistic manner.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Orientation, Innovativeness, Corporate Reputation, Organizational Culture, Competitive Strategies*.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the importance of organizational factors such as organizational culture, Porter's competitive strategies, entrepreneurial orientation in corporate reputation management (CRM), little is known how these factors affect CRM. In other words, when we review the literature to uncover what has been done about the CRM? We faced with a number of studies investigating the partial relations of the model that this paper proposes. However, to contribute the existing literature we think that it is an obligation to develop a comprehensive model to see the big picture. In this respect, that motivation represents the motivation behind the realization of this paper.

Briefly, organizational culture is defined as "a system of common values" that shared the members of an organization (Douglas, Davidson, and Schwartz, 2001). Cooke and Rousseau (1988) also defined this concept as "the shared beliefs and values guiding the thinking and behavioral styles of members".On the other hand, entrepreneurial orientation characterized into five dimensions namely; autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness of a firm (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). As an organizational construct, entrepreneurial orientation (Wales, Monson, McKelvie, 2011) is one of the most beneficial topics in entrepreneurship literature in terms of the performing better while compared the lower level entrepreneurial orientation (Zahra and Covin, 1995; Li et al., 2008). Since Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991; Barney, Wright, and Ketchen 2001) advocates that corporate reputation could be seen a kind of tangible source that enhancing firm's competitive performance (Bergh et al., 2010; Roberts and Dolwing, 2002), and since past researches indicate that innovation is one of the positive predictors of firm performance (Bresnahan, Stern and Trajtenberg, 1996) in this paper we focused on the innovativeness dimension of the entrepreneurial orientation. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) defined innovativeness as a propensity of an organization to support fresh and creative ideas/solutions that may lead to new products, services, and processes. Similarly, innovativeness refers to a) "newness of underlying technologies required for producing the product, b) newness of the products as perceived by the customers; and d) whether there are many, few or no competitors who produce or deliver the same products or services" (Bastian and Tucci, 2017). Porter's (1980) generic strategies are differentiation, overall low cost, and focus. Differentiation strategy refers to take competitive advantage producing unique and privileged products that create value for customers (Porter, 1980; Erkut, 2009) Overall low-cost strategy refers to taking competitive advantage to rivals by producing low-cost products that have same quality compared with the competitor (Ulgen and Mirze, 2004). On the other hand, focusing strategy refers to the implementation of differentiation and overall low-cost strategy simultaneously or separately in a specific area on targeted customers (Ulgen and Mirze, 2004). And lastly, corporate reputation is a kind of positive drivers' effects on the firm image (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). In other words, these drivers enhance organizations ongoing activity namely organization's financial values, customers' intention to buy, quality of product and service guaranty, customer and employee loyalty, and uniqueness of organization in a positive manner (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). Fombrun and Shanley (1990) also defined this concept as a kind of stakeholders' perception that evolved in time towards to an organization.

Despite past literature emphasize that business units, employees and departments of the organizations affects corporate reputation (Post and Griffin, 1997), the positive effects of these factors such as entrepreneurial orientation, innovativeness, and pattern of strategy implementation style have received scant attention. Supporting this notion past researches indicate that employees, as one of the most important assets of an organization, have vital importance on the corporate reputation management (Gofton, 2000). Similarly, Kennedy (1977) asserts that since they share their positive and negative experiences about the organization with the others, employees have a pivotal role in managing corporate reputation. Flanagan and O'Shaughnessy (2005) see this concept as a kind of source which fosters strategic superiority. This point of view is also shared by the current paper. Put another way, we propose that organizational culture as a shared perception of the members of organization, innovativeness, entrepreneurial orientation, and the type of strategy implemented by the organization interact each another and collectively contribute to the corporate reputation's positive outlook. In this respect, above-mentioned factors serve to the organization as feeder factors of corporate reputation.

This paper aims to explore and review the literature on corporate reputation management. It also proposes a conceptual model that suggests the drivers of CRM. In this respect, while organizational culture, innovativeness, and generic strategies play independent variable roles, CRP play as the dependent variable role. By means of this study, instead of customer-related factors, we draw attention to inter-organizational factors. Hence, focusing backstage factors could enable to foster both firm performance and, in turn, the image of the internal and external stakeholders.

The flow of the article as follows. First, the article discusses the conceptual definitions of the antecedents of CRM. Then, the findings of past studies were used to explain all links that connect to mediation relations. Grounded on Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) and those findings, we proposed a conceptual model. Finally, it concludes the importance of CRM in the organizations.

LITERATURE REVIW

In this conceptual paper, based on Barney's (1991) Resource-Based View, we propose a theoretical model based on the theory and the findings of past studies. The model simplifies and summarize the interrelations among the drivers of corporate reputation. Understanding these factors will provide a better understanding of the nature of corporate reputation.

Conceptual Background and Proposition Development

Despite it is formerly seen as a kind of public relations and under the responsibility of consultants, today corporate reputation represents one of the most important determinants of the firm's performance and success (Gray and Balmer, 1998). Corporate reputation is defined as "a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describe the firm's overall appeal to all its key constituents when compared to other leading rivals" (Fombrun, 1996). The key elements of the corporate reputation are management identity, desired identity, and image (Chun, 2005). Identity refers to "what the company is", the desired identity refers to "what the company says it is", and lastly image refers to "what the customer think it is" (Davies and Miles, 1998; (Chun, 2005). Many scholars have attempted to provide a framework for corporate reputation. While some of them have focused on the individual level predictors e.g. the forming and sustaining potential of employees, and managers actions that cultivate employee's commitment, enthusiasm, and consistent staff behavior (Gofton, 2000), the others investigated the organizational antecedents. For instance, Gray and Balmer (1998) investigate the effect of corporate communication and corporate identity on the corporate reputation. Customer trust and customer satisfaction are also individual-related predictors of corporate reputation (Walsh et al., 2009).

On the other hand, Lai et al. (2010) found that corporate social responsibility is one of the organizational level predictors of corporate reputation. Additionally, quality of inputs, quality of productive assets, certification of achievement, media rankings, and affiliation with high-status actors found as determinants of corporate reputation (Rindova et al., 2005). Taken together, a recent meta-analytic study summarized the 101 articles about the corporate reputation (Ali, Lynch, Melewar, & Jin, 2015). According to Ali et al. (2015)' study, the antecedents of corporate reputation are corporate financial performance, corporate social performance, media visibility, firm size, firm risk, firm age, and long-term institutional ownership. On the other hand, the consequences of corporate reputation are as follows; corporate (future) financial performance, customer loyalty, customer trust, and customer commitment (Ali et al., 2015).

Organizational culture is one of the most important determinants of organizational tangible and intangible outcomes. Organizational culture related studies are generally asserting two ideas: top managers prominent in determining the culture, and (b) culture is one of the essential drivers of organizational outcomes (O'Reilly, Caldwell, Chatman, & Doerr, 2014). Many researchers have been focused on the clarify antecedents and consequences of the organizational culture. However, in this paper, we focused on one of the positive outcomes of it i.e., corporate reputation. Limes et al. (2004) emphasize that organizational culture is a crucial resource.

Klein (2003), based on contingency theory, assert that every organization has a different organizational culture, and this necessitates performing different (appropriate) strategies. Despite many researchers investigate the effect of culture on the organizational outputs, and some studies did not find a significant effect of it on the firm'strategy (SáenzCastro; Chang Muñoz and MartínezVillavicencio, 2016), Ye, Hu and Li (2008) stress that organizational culture has a shaping effect of the firm's strategy. Supporting this notion Limes et al. (2004) emphasize that organizational culture is one of the significant predictors of firm performance, high-performance human resource, and competitive strategy. Solis et al. (2014)' study also indicate that organizational culture is one of the predictors of the firm's strategy. According to Bayraktar, Hancerliogullari, Cetinguc, and Calisir (2017) differentiation and low-cost leadership strategies have a positive effect on innovation, and in turn firm performance. Similarly, Zehir, Can, and Karaboğa (2015) also found that differentiation strategy effects innovation performance, and in turn firm performance. According to Kutz et al. (2011) innovativeness has a positive effect on corporate reputation. Besides the aforementioned studies, there is a consensus on the positive effects of innovation on corporate reputation (Linder and Seidenstricker, 2017). Moreover, another study stress that competitor orientation, technology orientation, and customer orientation affect innovativeness, in turn, firm performance (Shin and Lee, 2016). Since there is a positive relationship between firm performance and corporate image (Gonzalez, Camara, and Gonzalez, 2009), and since the corporate image is strongly associated with a corporate reputation (Szwajca, 2018), grounded on Resource-Based View the following proposition is that;

P1. Porters competitive strategies (differentiation and low-cost leadership) positively affects corporate reputation through innovativeness

Despite the mediating effect of culture on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation have already been investigated by past researchers (Abdullah and Aziz, 2011), they found a positive effect of organizational culture on the corporate reputation the knowledge about how organizational culture affects corporate reputation through innovativeness still keeps its mystery. O'Reilly et al. (2014) found that CEO personality plays a key role in determining the organizational culture, and culture has a positive effect on a broad set of organizational outputs e.g., corporate reputation, financial performance, employee attitudes etc. Brettel, Chomik and Flatten (2015) found that organizational culture (group, developmental, and rational) has a positive and significant effect on innovativeness. Supporting this notion, Tastan (2015) also found that organizational culture has a positive effect on employee's innovativeness. Since Kutz et al. (2011) assert that innovativeness has a positive effect on corporate reputation and since there is a consensus on the positive effects of innovation on corporate reputation (Linder and Seidenstricker, 2017), as a matter, of course, it is easy to say that culture may affect corporate reputation via innovativeness. The institutional theory also plays as a key role in explaining how to build a corporate reputation (Walker, 2010). In other words, this theory is used to explain gaining legitimacy and cultural support to build a corporate reputation in their institutional milieu (Rao, 1994; Deephouse and Carter, 2005; Staw and Epstein, 2000). Grounded on the Resource-Based View and Institutional theory, and the findings of past researchers, we propose that;

P2. Organizational culture positively affects corporate reputation through innovativeness.

Walker (2010), in their systematic and theoretical study, summarized the theoretical approaches that assist to explain how corporate reputation rise to the surface. According to his study, theoretical approaches dived into three stages namely pre-action, action, action, and post-action. While the first stage refers to the institutional theory, second refers to signaling theory and the latter refers to resource-based review (Walker, 2010). As understood from these explanations, since innovativeness refers to new and creative ideas/solutions that may lead to new products, services, and processes (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996), and since innovativeness has many positive effects on firm's image such as increasing product purchasing, favorable pioneer image, high-level quality image, and positive customer evaluation (Golder and Tellis, 1993; Aaker and Keller, 1990; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Heath et al., 2011) we could say that the effect of innovativeness on the corporate reputation fall in the category of post-action. In this respect, grounded on Resource-Based Review, we explain the effect of the firm's strategies (differentiation and low-cost leadership) on the corporate reputation through innovativeness.

In the literature, many researchers have investigated the effect of Porter's generic strategies i.e. intended strategies on the firm profit maximization, performance, and reputation etc. (Dess and Davis, 1984; Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; O'Farrell, Kitchens, and Moffat, 1993). These generic strategies dived into three sub-dimensions namely differentiation, overall low cost, and focus. Differentiation strategy refers to take competitive advantage producing unique and privileged products that create value for customers (Porter, 1980; Erkut, 2009). O'Farrell et al. (1993) stress that differentiation strategy is a kind of building corporate reputation. Overall low-cost strategy refers to taking competitive advantage to rivals by producing low-cost products that have the same quality compared with the competitor (Ulgen and Mirze, 2004). On the other hand, focusing strategy refers to the implementation of differentiation and overall low-cost strategy simultaneously or separately in a specific area on targeted customers (Ulgen and Mirze, 2004). Gray and Balmer (1998) state that a firm's corporate identity refers to uniqueness and the reality of an organization. This concept contains some sub-dimension namely the company's strategy, organizational culture, organizational design, and philosophy. In their operational model, they emphasized the flow of the corporate reputation management process (see Figure 1).

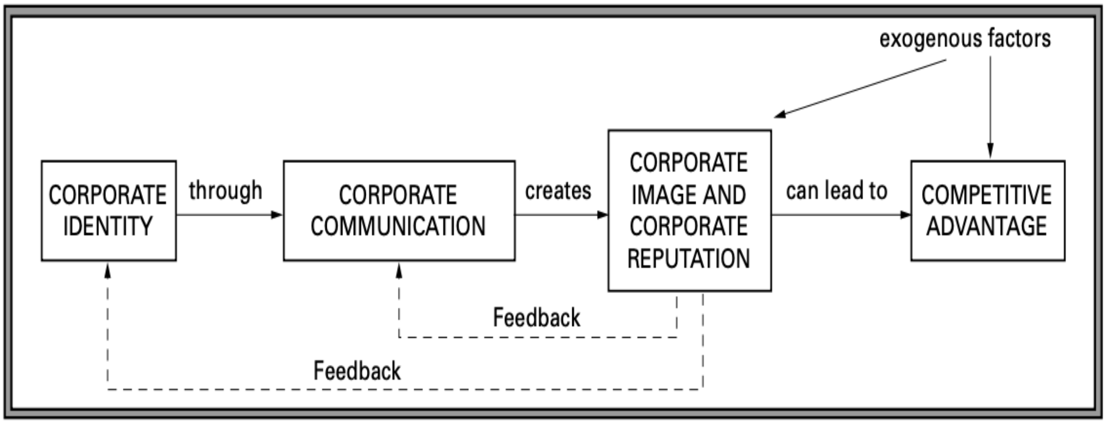

Figure 1. Operational model for managing corporate reputation and image (Gray and Balmer, 1998).

As seen from the Figure 1 since corporate strategy is one of the components of the corporate identity and since it indirectly (via corporate communication) leads to the corporate image and corporate reputation, it is easy to say that firm's strategy has a critical role in the corporate management constitution process. Kim and Lim (1988) found that companies that implemented the generic strategies (cost leadership, differentiation) perform better than the others. Supporting this notion Karyani and Rossieta (2018) found that despite differentiation and cost leadership has a positive effect on financial performance, only cost leadership strategy allows a persistent superior performance in the banking sector. Bayraktar, Hancerliogullari, Cetinguc, and Calisir (2017) also found that differentiation and low-cost leadership strategies have a positive effect on innovation and in turn firm performance. Similarly, Zehir, Can, and Karaboğa (2015) also found that differentiation strategy effects innovation performance, and in turn firm performance. When considered these studies since innovativeness has a positive effect on corporate reputation (Kutz et al., 2011), and since it leads firm performance it is easy to say that these indicators must be positively associated with corporate reputation. Considering all of these, based on both past studies and Resource-Based View we propose that;

P3. Porter's generic strategies (differentiation and cost leadership) positively affects corporate reputation through innovativeness.

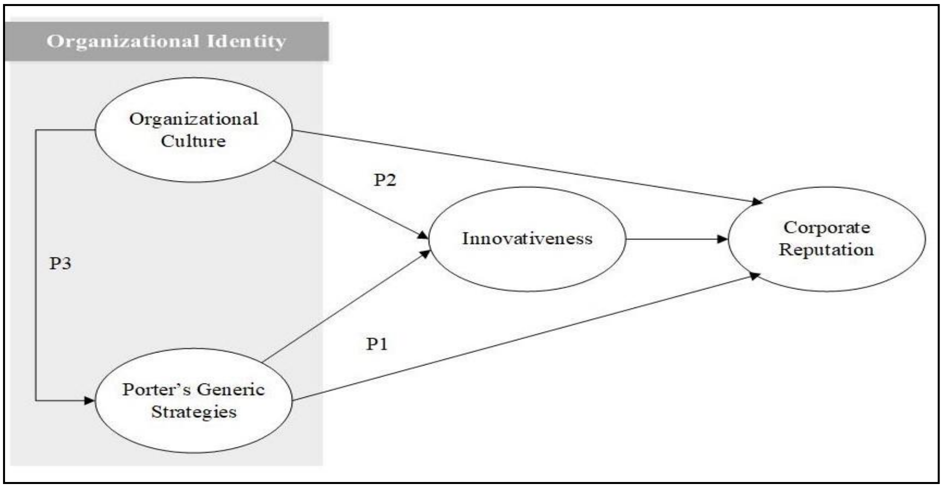

Figure 2. Proposed Conceptual Model

CONCLUSION

From past to present there has been lots of change in the understanding of the nature of organizations. While some of these changes associated with internal factors the others are related to external factors. There are also some other topics that interest both internal and external stakeholders. One of them is corporate reputation. Since reputation is strongly related to the perception of the internal (organizational identity) and external (organizational image) shake holders (Walker, 2010) managing this issue efficiently has a vital importance for the organizations. As early stated Fombrun and Shanley (1990) defined this concept as a kind of stakeholders' perception that evolved in time towards to an organization. However, this definition is a lack of in reflecting the past actions. Because (Fombrun, 1996) defined this concept as "a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describe the firm's overall appeal to all its key constituents when compared to other leading rivals". From this point of view firm's past action is also important indicators in building a desired corporate reputation. In this respect based on Resource Based Review (Barney, 1991) having some intangible and tangible sources facilitate having a sustainable competitive advantage. Since customer value and rarity provided by outcomes-from the aspects of Resouce Based View (Walker, 2010)- to sustain competitive advantage is possible by having appropriate organizational culture that facilitate implementation of appropriate differentiation which is strongly related with the innovativeness (Zehir vd., 2015; Bayraktar et al., 2017) or low-cost leadership strategies. This, in turn, could lead to the desired corporate reputation. In this respect creating a favorable corporate reputation could lead to increasing financial values, customers' intention to buy, quality of the product, quality of service guaranty, customer and employee loyalty, and uniqueness of organization in a positive manner (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). Taken together, despite many researchers have already discussed in detail this issue, there are still gaps that address to need for the development of the construct. We believe that the proposed model (see Figure 1) would contribute to the existing literature in four ways; a) integrating three potential predictors of corporate reputation in the same model could catalyze the understanding of big picture of corporate reputation, b) comparing the effect of all variables separately will provide to see which factor is dominant, c) testing mediating effects could uncover the role of independent variables in predicting dependent variable, d) presenting a testable model will contribute to the theory. Despite its theoretical background and comprehensive literature review, the main limitation of this paper is that it is lack of an empirical nature, therefore testing the proposed model by empirically will contribute to achieving one of the primary purposes of the study.

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