



Entrepreneurship

Are small business owners entrepreneurs? Exploring small business manager behavioral profiles in the São Paulo Metropolitan region

¿Son emprendedores los microempresarios? Explorando perfiles comportamentales de gestores de pequeñas empresas en la región metropolitana de São Paulo

Microempresários são empreendedores? Explorando perfis comportamentais de gestores de pequenas empresas na região metropolitana de São Paulo

Roberto Coda*, Patrícia Viveiros de Castro Krakauer, Davi de França Berne

Faculdade Campo Limpo Paulista (FACCAMP), São Paulo, SP, Brazil

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Abstract

This article presents the results of an exploratory study to identify behavioral styles of professionals performing managing functions in micro and small enterprises. The M.A.R.E. Diagnosis was used to analyze motivational orientation adapted to the context of Brazilian organizations. This quantitative research included 407 managers of small enterprises in the western metropolitan region of São Paulo City (SP). A comparative analysis was conducted of a sample of micro and small business owners and the results of a Brazilian sample collected in previous studies. The results showed that these managers are significantly more focused on Entrepreneurial and Analytical orientations. They are predominantly Producers, Competitors, Achievers, Facilitators, Monitors and Regulators, indicating that the behavioral development of small enterprise managers is associated with their efforts to focus on resources, concerns over improving planning and organization standards in their organizations, and on becoming aware of and implementing much needed innovation.

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Keywords: Leadership styles; Small businesses; Entrepreneurship

Resumo

O artigo apresenta os resultados de pesquisa exploratória que teve como objetivo identificar os estilos comportamentais dos profissionais que exercem funções de comando junto a micro e pequenas empresas. Utilizou-se o diagnóstico M.A.R.E que analisa orientações motivacionais adaptadas para o contexto de organizações brasileiras. Trata-se de uma pesquisa quantitativa envolvendo 407 gestores de microempresas da região metropolitana oeste da cidade de São Paulo (SP). Foi realizada uma análise comparativa da amostra de micro e pequenos empresários com os resultados da amostra brasileira coletada em estudos anteriores. A análise dos resultados apontou que os microempresários estão significativamente mais voltados para as orientações Empreendedora e Analítica, sendo predominantemente pertencentes aos perfis Produtor, Competidor, Realizador,

* Corresponding author.

E-mails: roberto.coda@faccamp.br (R. Coda), patricia.krakauer@faccamp.br (P.V. Krakauer), dfberne@gmail.com (D.F. Berne).

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Facilitador, Monitor e Regulador, indicando que o esforço do desenvolvimento comportamental de microempresários acha-se atrelado a um maior foco no mercado e na garantia de recursos, melhoria dos padrões de planejamento e organização de suas empresas, além de se conscientizarem a respeito da imperativa necessidade de inovar.

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Palavras-chave: Perfis comportamentais; Micro e pequenas empresas; Empreendedorismo

Resumen

El artículo presenta los resultados de una investigación exploratoria que tuvo como objetivo identificar los estilos comportamentales de los profesionales que ejercen funciones de comando junto a las micro y pequeñas empresas. Se usó como diagnóstico M.A.R.E, que analiza orientaciones motivacionales adaptadas para el contexto de las organizaciones brasileñas. Se trata de un estudio cuantitativo envolviendo 407 gestores de microempresas de la región metropolitana oeste de la ciudad de São Paulo (SP). Se hizo un análisis comparativo de esta muestra con los resultados de la muestra brasileña colectada en estudios anteriores. El análisis de los resultados apuntó que los microempresarios están mucho más inclinados hacia las orientaciones Emprendedoras y Analíticas, y que pertenecen predominantemente a los perfiles Productor, Competidor, Realizador, Facilitador, Monitor y Regulador, indicando que el esfuerzo del desarrollo comportamental de los microempresarios está mucho más centrado en el mercado y en la garantía de recursos, mejoría de los patrones de planeamiento y organización de sus empresas, y también, de tomar conciencia con respecto a la imperativa necesidad de innovar.

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Palabras clave: Perfiles comportamentales; Micro y pequeñas empresas; Espíritu empresarial

Introduction

In organizational environments, the identification of behavior patterns or styles has aided the recognition of trends in the actions of professionals. This, in turn, provides orientation for training and development and their allocation in work through a guaranteed balance between natural preferences in terms of actions and needs or the requirements of the positions they hold and their activities. Using a reference framework to identify behavior patterns in working situations and built on the reality of Brazilian organizations, the general objective of this article is to identify the behavioral styles of professionals in positions of leadership in micro and small enterprises (MSE), using the western metropolitan region of the city of São Paulo as a research context. The focus of the study is to verify what kind of entrepreneurial behavior they display when working.

This region stands out in the economic context of the city of São Paulo, as its GDP is around 55,000,000 US dollars for a population of almost thirteen million according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2016). Furthermore, the 15 municipalities that make up the region implemented a General Law for MSE with a view to obtaining incentives and funding to improve these enterprises. This shows their concern over stimulating entrepreneurship and thus the region may be characterized as a suitable environment for the present study.

Until the mid-nineteen eighties, large organizations were predominant in the world scenario, driven by industrialization and mass production. This trend shifted over time and smaller companies began to gain ground and become increasingly important. Nowadays, their importance cannot be disputed, both in social and economic terms. They also play an important role in

competitiveness, the development of new technologies and providing support for big companies (Huang, 2009; Longenecker, Moore, & Petty, 1997).

There are over ten million micro and small entrepreneurs in Brazil. They have steadily come to play a more important role in the economy, and by 2015, they were responsible for 27% of gross domestic product and 52% of the country's registered workforce. It should be emphasized that most MSE are located in the southeast. Indeed, 50% of these companies are located in this region (Brasil, 2015), thereby justifying the sample selected for the purposes of this study.

It is understood that knowledge regarding the possible behavioral profiles of small business executives, both dominant and absent, might shed some light on why the companies they run struggle to survive in the market. This knowledge may also help to guide their development as managers, especially regarding the behavior that they need to put into practice to ensure a more integrated management of their businesses.

Several Brazilian and international studies have found that micro and small enterprises (MSE) are essential for the growth and economic development of any country. In Brazil, MSE are faced with a number of obstacles related to management, survival and regulations. Many of these businesses perish when they attempt to assume a competitive stance.

Among other factors, changing this reality depends on the managers or executives of MSE adopting behavior focused on entrepreneurship, leveraging their competitiveness, profitability, longevity and innovation. This could lead to higher levels of effectiveness, focusing on achievement, being ready for change and adopting a more aggressive stance in the market (Utsch, Rauch, Rothfuß, & Frese, 1999). An entrepreneurial profile has

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