

Source: Rupčić, N. (2016): Exploring strategic and learning orientation: Is there room for controversy?, Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference “An Enterprise Odyssey: Saving the sinking ship through human capital”, Galetić, L., Načinović Braje, I., Jaković, B. (Eds), Zagreb, Croatia, pp. 245-253.

## EXPLORING STRATEGIC AND LEARNING ORIENTATION: IS THERE ROOM FOR CONTROVERSY?

Ass. Prof. Nataša RUPČIĆ, Ph.D.\*

Faculty of Economics, University of Rijeka, Ivana Filipovića 4, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia

[natasa.rupcic@efri.hr](mailto:natasa.rupcic@efri.hr)

### Abstract

*Marketing, strategic and learning literature has proposed several business orientations, which can positively affect organizational performance, such as market, learning, strategic, entrepreneurial, employee, competitor, customer and cost orientation. Prior research offered limited insight into the relationship between strategic orientation, learning orientation and organizational performance. For that purpose, learning orientation, as a factor that mediates the relationship between strategic orientation and organizational performance has been suggested. Research propositions linking strategic and learning orientation and organizational performance have been developed. In addition, suggestions have been given on how to approach exploration of strategic and learning orientation considering recent theoretical and empirical advancements.*

**Keywords:** business orientation, strategic orientation, learning orientation, entrepreneurial orientation

JEL classification codes: L21, L22, M12, M14, D82

### Introduction

Rapid changes in the environment require modern organizations to continuously transform and reposition themselves in order to maintain legitimacy. Different streams of literature have so far produced several business orientations, which can positively affect organizational performance, such as market, learning, strategic, entrepreneurial, innovation, employee, competitor, customer and cost orientation. Since knowledge has been identified as crucial business resource that can ensure competitive advantage (Grant, 1996), organizational activities and practices should be carefully designed to stimulate knowledge acquisition, learning and strategically led organizational development. Drawing on the learning and strategic literature, this study especially examines the relationship between two distinct yet related and complementary organizational behavior characteristics – learning and strategic orientation. Organizational practices can serve as great facilitators of change, but also as barriers to change and “organizational disabilities” (Schein, 1996), preventing organizational transformation. However, based on extensive literature review it can be concluded that multiple perspectives exist regarding conceptualization of strategic and learning orientation, leading to confusion and uncertainty on the part of practitioners over their application. That is why the goal of this research was to identify how companies could become strategic and learning oriented, which requires identifying business activities and processes or, in other words, behavioral routines that support them. In sum, the paper addresses three main research questions:

*RQ1: What is the relationship between identified business orientations?*

*RQ2: What is the relationship between the strategic and learning orientation?*

*RQ3: What constitutes strategic and learning orientation?*

In this work, strategic and learning orientation have been considered organizational characteristics, which are mirrored in the corresponding individual behavior. There is the need to address the dynamics between their constituents, which is both a theoretical and a practical challenge. At this stage, the research is focused on exploring possible inconsistencies linked to strategic and learning orientations that have to be challenged prior to empirical analysis.

---

\* Corresponding author. This work has been fully supported by the University of Rijeka under the project number 13.02.1.3.06.

## Interrelatedness between business perspectives

Marketing, strategic and learning literature have so far proposed several business orientations that can positively affect organizational performance such as market, learning, strategic, entrepreneurial, innovation, employee, competitor, customer and cost orientation. However, they are also considered alternative strategic orientations (Grinstein, 2008). The most dominant stream of research is related to market orientation, which has received the most attention due to positive relationship with organizational performance that has been confirmed in various industrial contexts (e.g. Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990). However, it was found that companies that combine other orientations with market orientation are likely to achieve even better results. Grinstein (2008) found that market orientation is strongly correlated with learning, entrepreneurial, and employee orientation, while the relationship with innovation orientation was moderately positive.

Strategic orientation refers to strategic directions, which create certain business behavior, which subsequently results in superior business performance (Gatignon and Xuereb, 1997). It has been identified as an organizational behavioral characteristic on how to conduct business by achieving alignment with the environment (Baba, 2015; Grinstein, 2008). Strategic orientation therefore refers to organizational behavioral characteristics or practices and routines designed for the purpose to support the strategic management process. Importance of strategic orientation has also been recognized in the nonprofit sector (Voss and Voss, 2000). Baba (2015) found that it has a stronger impact on their performance than market orientation.

Innovation orientation refers to companies that introduce new and high quality products, services, processes, and methods of production, which enables them to become technological leaders (Damanpour, 1991). That is why this orientation is often labeled technological or product orientation (Grinstein, 2008). Entrepreneurial orientation seems to be closely related to innovation orientation. It reflects organizational propensity to identify market opportunities, act proactively, take risks, build new competencies, innovate, and transform themselves and the market (Atuahene-Gima and Ko, 2001; Bhuian *et al.*, 2005). Entrepreneurial orientation has been identified as a strategic orientation (Miles and Arnold, 1991; Green, *et al.*, 2008; Hakala, 2013), while companies with entrepreneurial behavior adjust their operations in competitive environment better (Covin and Slevin, 1989). Considering the fact that the success or failure of innovations cannot be planned, innovation should be driven by joint exploration of strategic opportunities, or in other words supported by the strategic orientation, which in modern business is essentially entrepreneurial. That is why it is suggested that strategic orientation should be considered entrepreneurial, making those two orientations a match in modern business. In addition, Kraus and Kauranen (2009) have also indicated that entrepreneurship and modern strategic management share one dominant characteristic: both are aimed at identifying business opportunities and matching resources with those opportunities.

Upon closer inspection it can be concluded that all previously identified orientations share a common trait – they rely on the process of learning. The relationship between learning and performance has generally been found to be positive (Zhao *et al.*, 2011). That is why organizations are continuously looking for ways to increase their learning capacity. Learning and knowledge have been recognized as major sources that can enable firms to obtain competitive advantages (Grant, 1996). High levels of learning have also been associated with increased innovations (Hurley and Hult, 1998) and creativity (Weisberg, 1999). Lynn *et al.* (1999) found that learning enhances the possibility to develop new products successfully in high-tech companies. Learning seems to influence positively the level of performance in international business venturing (Kropp *et al.*, 2006). Knowledge is also essential for exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities.

Despite the fact that market orientation does encompass a certain level of learning, it is predominantly focused on exploitative (March, 1991) or adaptive learning (Senge, 1990), which is aimed at exploiting existing knowledge about the market. On the other hand, exploratory (March, 1991) or generative learning (Senge, 1990) is focused on exploring new knowledge of various origin, which could result in new suggestions for further strategic development. Adaptive learning is therefore known to result in incremental change, while generative learning is known to result in radical or transformative change (Senge, 1990). Since knowledge and learning have been identified as crucial business resources that can ensure competitive advantage (Grant, 1996; Senge, 1990), organizational activities and practices should be carefully designed to stimulate knowledge acquisition, learning and strategically led organizational development. In other words, it is suggested that organizations build a strong learning orientation.

Learning orientation is usually related to the process of knowledge development (Grinstein, 2008). Baker and Sinkula (1999) define it as “an organizational characteristic that reflects the value that a firm places not only on

adroitly responding to changes in the environment but on constantly challenging the assumptions that frame the organization's relationship with the environment." Sinkula *et al.* (1997) consider learning orientation as a set of knowledge-questioning values. Felix (2005) sees learning orientation as "the manifestation of the organization's propensity to learn and adapt accordingly" and equates it with the process of organizational learning. The development of a learning orientation can be considered a conscious attempt by management to coordinate organizational activities and introduce behavioral routines with the purpose to increase individual and organizational knowledge base and provide change perspectives. It enables organizations to translate their knowledge into new value added more effectively and therefore achieve their mission and vision.

Learning orientation is found to have a significant positive effect on performance (Farrell, 2001), growth in the manufacturing sector (Sadler-Smith *et al.*, 2001), and innovative efficiency (Lopez *et al.*, 2005). Baker and Sinkula (1999) found that without a strong learning orientation market orientation is less likely to improve performance significantly relative to market rivals. According to the resource-based theory (Hunt and Morgan, 1996) learning and especially organizational learning is a strategic resource, which relates positively to economic performance. Learning orientation has been identified as the principle means necessary to achieve organizational strategic renewal (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003; Lumpkin and Lichtenstein, 2005). It has been found in previous studies (Baker and Sinkula, 1999) that both strategic and learning orientation, when investigated separately, positively influence organizational performance. However, the learning orientation-strategic orientation-organizational performance relationship remains under-researched.

Learning orientation can result in a new knowledge, which can lead to innovation and organizational change. However, without a strong emphasis on the strategic orientation to provide direction, it could lead an organization astray and cause losses due to failed attempts to introduce change. Strategic orientation without a strong learning orientation may be responsible for creating stable yet stagnant environment, steering the organization into a predictable direction. The importance of learning can be derived from the fact that competitive advantage cannot be based on mere strategy replication of market rivals (Jacobson, 1992). A strong learning orientation can provide valuable insights into perspectives of further organizational strategic development. Higher order learning has been identified as important for building competitive advantage (Hunt and Morgan, 1996; Dickson, 1996). A strong strategic orientation should therefore be supported by a strong learning orientation. Learning orientation may therefore represent a developmental approach that enables the translation and transformation of new strategic initiatives into superior organizational performance. It is therefore expected that the two distinct, yet interrelated concepts have both separate and linear, as well as joint and synergistic effects on various dimensions of organizational performance. Synergistic effects of strategic and learning orientation can be estimated by determining the mediation effects of learning orientation in the relationship between strategic orientation and organizational performance. The following research propositions are therefore suggested:

*RP1: Organizations with a stronger learning orientation will have better organizational performance.*

*RP2: Organizations with a stronger strategic orientation will have better organizational performance.*

*RP3: Learning orientation moderates the relationship between strategic orientation and business performance. In other words: the greater an organization's learning orientation, the stronger the positive relationship between its strategic orientation and its performance.*

*RP4: Learning orientation mediates the relationship between strategic orientation and organizational performance.*

## **Conceptualization of strategic and learning orientation**

Based on extensive literature review it can be concluded that multiple perspectives exist regarding conceptualization of strategic and learning orientations, leading to substantial confusion and uncertainty on the part of practitioners over their application. Learning orientation has been mostly investigated by using the research instrument designed by Baker and Sinkula (1999). That instrument consists of the following dimensions: (1) commitment to learning, (2) open-mindedness, and (3) shared vision. However, consensus that learning orientation encompasses those dimensions exists predominantly in the marketing literature. Previous research on learning orientation have also focused on commitment to learning, acceptance of change, teamwork, management support and facilitative leadership, and the existence of systems, processes and incentives for operationalizing organizational learning (Bennett, 1998).

Literature review reveals that strategic orientation is often conceptualized by strategy typologies, alternating between the two most famous typologies – that of Miles and Snow (1978) (prospectors, defenders, analyzers,

and reactors), and of Porter (1980) (differentiation and cost leadership strategy). However, literature on strategic management and learning organizations has since grown both theoretically and empirically. This calls for the need to reassess measurement instruments and propose a more comprehensive framework using multiple aspects of the strategic and learning orientation in order to produce empirical evidence of their relevance as well as normative guidelines for managerial decision-making. Besides identifying their antecedents, emphasis should be placed on estimating their effect on various aspects of organizational performance: efficiency, effectiveness, and viability or sustainability.

In this work, business orientations are primarily viewed as certain organizational characteristics reflected in specific organizational behavior and routines. That is why it is claimed that both learning and strategic orientation relate to a specific organizational behavior which is institutionalized by certain organizational routines directing individual behavior. That is consistent with postulates of the organizational theory, which explains organizational behavior as a derivative of actions pursued by organizational members.

The first prerequisite for organizational learning is individual learning and knowledge sharing. Individual learning orientation can be defined as an individual dedication towards comprehending new things and improving their level of competences (Dweck and Leggett, 1988; DeShon and Gillespie, 2005). It therefore refers to an individual mind-set or an internal drive that directs individual behavior towards learning in order to achieve mastery and excellence. Individuals with a strong learning orientation continuously seek new learning opportunities, set challenging learning tasks (Ames and Archer, 1988), and thrive on the feeling of personal growth and mastery derived from their work. Individual learning is therefore the first constituent of the organizational learning orientation. This statement is in accordance with the general outlook on learning orientation, which is predominantly related to the process of knowledge development (Grinstein, 2008).

Learning is usually identified with the process of information acquisition, dissemination and implementation in the value creation process (Huber, 1991). However, organizations nourishing a strong learning orientation devote time and resources to the process of information and knowledge interpretation. Collective participation in information and knowledge interpretation can open up new perspectives regarding knowledge utilization, which can have tremendous implications for further organizational actions. Collective and joint interpretation facilitates adaptive learning, which enables incremental improvements of organizational activities. However, that process could leave an organization operating within the boundaries of an existing paradigm, which can hinder long-term sustainability in case of dynamic changes in the environment. This fact gives rise to the need to establish the practice of reviewing and assessing organizational assumptions regarding all elements of the value creation process – inputs, operating processes, markets served and distribution channels. In other words, organizational members should review and revise cause and effect relationships regarding both internal and external constituents. In case severe mismatch of outcome to the desired results or expectations is detected organizational members should start examining organizational assumptions or mental models, which can result in a significant strategic shift. This is a characteristic of the generative or double-loop learning (Argyris and Schoen, 1978), which prompts changes in the strategic management process regarding policies, and procedures, but also goals, strategies and tactics. It enables the organization to take advantage of new opportunities to avoid upheaval. Mental model reassessment serves to prevent narrow focus and resistance to change stemming from various ideological reasons. Collective knowledge interpretation and mental model assessment can be considered second constituent of the organizational learning orientation.

In order to implement successfully the learning orientation organizational activities should have a high degree of compatibility with an organizational value system. Organizational culture refers to a set of values shared by organizational members and reflected in their relationships with stakeholders (Patterson et al., 2005). Learning culture encourages employees to consider and review knowledge that lies outside the immediate scope of their current work, but could have potential in future actions. Failures are tolerated because they are considered a source of learning and are openly discussed (Dixon, 1992). Organizations that promote learning culture that fosters proactiveness, moderate risk taking, learning, knowledge sharing, creativity, and innovations would further attract individuals with similar work expectations, which would further reinforce both the learning and strategic orientation. The argument for introducing a learning culture to the learning orientation construct can be found in literature. Galer and van der Heijden (1992) mention the “culture amenable to learning” as a prerequisite for gaining knowledge and understanding of environmental relations. The importance of developing a learning culture for the purpose of achieving and maintaining organizational effectiveness has also been identified by Gill (2009).

Leadership has been identified as crucial for establishing a stimulating organizational culture that fosters challenging of the status quo (Senge, 1990). The style of leadership especially associated with organizational

learning is transformational leadership (García-Morales *et al.*, 2012). Transformational leaders are known to be intellectually stimulating, eager to experiment with new perspectives and approaches to problem solving, inspirational in their ability to maintain a creative momentum towards the common vision, but also individualized when needed in terms of serving as mentors and providing support (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders urge organizational members to proactively look for potential changes in their environment, learn from them, assess opportunities and threats, take calculated risks and look for new ways of operating (Zhao, 2011). The role of transformational leaders is especially important because they stimulate behavioral change through their continuous incentive to question operating rules (Bass and Avolio, 1990).

Organizations striving to implement a strong strategic orientation are always on high alert for new development possibilities. Exploration of opportunities is therefore the first variable of the strategic orientation construct. Since opportunities can arise from any aspect of the value creation process and any relationship with stakeholders, it is important that management allow for organization-wide participation in identifying opportunities. In order to identify opportunities organizational members need to engage in environmental scanning. Environmental scanning includes monitoring, evaluating and disseminating information from external and internal environment (Wei Hin *et al.*, 2013). It is especially useful to capture the interconnectedness of factors affecting business performance in order to put forth a purposeful action. Supported by a strong learning orientation, individuals and teams within an organization can implement the “blue ocean” concept (Kim and Mauborgne 20015) or in other words look for new ways of satisfying customer needs, which could lead to market transformations.

After exploring opportunities, vision is developed or modified. Shared vision is also an element that Baker and Sinkula (1999) and Sinkula *et al.* (1997) consider one of the elements of the learning orientation construct. However, vision formulation, as well as desired outcome prediction in terms of value proposition for targeted customers, is the task of strategic management, which comprises top management, but also empowered key individuals. Achievable vision can also be crafted as a direct result of learning regarding all elements of the value creation process, including input procurement and distribution strategy. Shared vision can further contribute to the goal convergence (Galer and van der Heijden, 1992). However, unless the vision is shared and conveyed across hierarchical layers, accompanied by wider employee participation, it is difficult to expect alignment between further learning, improvement of current operations and innovation.

It has been found that companies often lack an articulated corporate level strategy (Stiles, 2001). However, every company can identify a strategic direction that it is trying to pursue. Mintzberg (1994) found that successful strategies can never be planned in a formalized way but emerge in an informal process involving learning, creativity, and intuition. Grant (2003) states that strategy formulation models fail to capture the richness and complexity of firms. That is why entrepreneurial organizations are continuously working on new strategic options (Dyson *et al.*, 1998), as a third constituent of the strategic orientation. This is also in accordance with the conclusion by David (2005) that due to a dramatic increase in the environment’s complexity even the best plans suffer from a rapid rate of obsolescence. The search for strategic options is an extensive process calling for an organization-wide participation, including extensive testing, simulations, and modifications.

Strategic orientation should be supported by a continuous strategic competence evaluation. Accepted strategic options and plans should be used to define directions for further knowledge management activities. Strategy is considered the most important factor for determining necessary organizational knowledge (Donate and Canales, 2012; Farraresi *et al.*, 2012). Companies should therefore consider the interconnectedness between strategy and knowledge before initiating KM programs (Zack, 2002). Even though task-related knowledge acquisition is predominantly an individual responsibility, direction, guidelines, and incentives should come from the organization-wide consensus regarding strategic initiatives (Grant, 1996). Companies that are more active in looking for new strategic opportunities are also more likely to search and acquire new knowledge, assess current business models and assumptions upon which they are based, and implement new insight to reap benefits provided by current opportunities.

It can be concluded that all elements of the strategic and learning orientation are interconnected and intertwined. They have the joint purpose to stimulate commitment to learning and open relationships among organizational members and external stakeholders, as well as to challenge the status quo and assumptions used to sustain it. While learning orientation may enable acquisition and generation of information and knowledge in various ways, their diffusion and further learning may remain scattered without a shared vision and a clear strategic direction. Exploring the validity of long-held operational assumptions may not result in exploration of new opportunities and markets unless captured in strategic intentions and plans. In that way, learning orientation could prove futile when performed in the absence of clear transformational drivers in terms of agreed strategic orientation.

Learning orientation can act as a driving force behind strategic orientation that prevents rigidity, complacency, and arrogance. By engaging in information and knowledge acquisition, organizational members also engage in its interpretation and transfer, which leads to questioning of the validity of the dominant logic or corporate theory-in-use, which could subsequently stimulate changes in the strategic management process. The opposite is also true: a strong learning orientation implemented in the absence of a strong strategic orientation may lead to costly learning, experiments and innovative behavior without clear commercialization potential. The proposed conceptualization of both strategic and learning orientation indicates that the process is multiprismatic, emerging through a broad range of interactions and assessments between a series of interconnected activities.

## Conclusion

This paper aims to advance theoretical discussions regarding various business orientations, with a special emphasis on strategic and learning orientation, as two interrelated and complementary fields of study. Following some prior research (eg. Baker and Sinkula, 1999), in this work learning and strategic orientation have been considered organizational characteristics or characteristics of organizational behavior, which indicate emphasis that an organization is placing on learning and strategic oriented activities. Both strategic and learning orientation are regarded as business practices that serve as drivers for individual behavior and stimulate effectiveness of organizational learning and strategic management. They are also considered as continuous and complementary phenomena that develop over time and reinforce themselves. A balanced approach in developing both strategic and learning orientation as two interrelated and complementary business orientation is advocated, which could produce synergistic effect on organizational performance. In that way they become organizational dynamic capabilities, enabling companies to more easily reconfigure and adjust relative to external and internal threats and opportunities.

Notwithstanding the lack of direct empirical evidence and the intent to fill this gap with the future empirical analysis, it is expected that learning orientation would have a significant effect mediating the relationship between strategic orientation and organizational performance. Even though the learning orientation is expected to exhibit a moderation effect, based on the thorough theoretical analysis provided in this paper, it is expected that the mediating role of the learning organization would be even stronger. It is expected that the forthcoming empirical study would support suggested contentions and the general assertion that when applied synergistically both learning and strategic orientation have a strong potential to ensure organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Managers also need an instrument against which they could measure and benchmark the extent to which their organization displays strategic and learning orientation or the propensity towards strategic and learning behavior. Suggestions in this work regarding strategic and learning orientation constituents could assist executives to initiate changes aimed at developing a stronger strategic and learning orientation. The value of this work is therefore theoretical, but also normative.

## References

- Ames, C., Archer, J., (1988), Achievement goals in the classroom: Students' learning strategies and motivation processes, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 80, 260–267.
- Argyris, C., Schön, D.A., (1978), *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Atuahene-Gima, K., Ko, A., (2001), An empirical investigation of the effect of market orientation and entrepreneurship orientation alignment on product innovation, *Organization Science*, Vol. 12, no. 1, 54-74.
- Baba, Y., (2015), Does learning orientation matter for nonprofit organization performance? Empirical evidence from Ghana, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 36, no. 3, 234 – 252.
- Baker, W.E., Sinkula, J.M., (1999), The Synergistic Effect of Market Orientation and Learning Orientation on Organizational Performance, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 27, no. 4, 411-427.
- Bass, B.M., (1985), *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*, Free Press, New York.
- Bass, B.M., Avolio, B.J., (1990), The implications of transactional and transformational leadership for individual, team, and organizational development, In: Woodman, R.W., Pasmore, W.A. (Eds.), *Research in organizational change and development*, Vol. 4, 231–272, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT.
- Bennett, R., (1998), Charities, organisational learning and market orientation, *Journal of Marketing Practice: Applied Marketing Science*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 5–25.
- Bhuiyan, S., Menguc, B., Bell, S., (2005), Just entrepreneurial enough: the moderating effect of entrepreneurship on the relationship between market orientation and performance, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 58, 9-17.

- Covin, J.G., Slevin, D.P., (1989), Strategic management of small firms in hostile and benign environments, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 10, no. 1, 75-87.
- Crossan, M.M., Berdrow, I., (2003), Organizational learning and strategic renewal, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 24, no. 11, 1087-1105.
- Damanpour, F., (1991), Organizational innovation: a meta-analysis of effects of determinants and moderators, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 34, no. 3, 555-90.
- David, F. R., (2005), *Strategic Management Concepts and Cases*, 10th Edition, Pearson Prentice Hall.
- DeShon, R., Gillespie, J.Z., (2005), A motivated action theory account of goal orientation, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 90, 1096-1127.
- Dickson, P.R., (1996), The Static and Dynamic Mechanics of Competition: A Comment on Hunt and Morgan's Comparative Advantage Theory, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 60, 102-106.
- Dixon, N., (1992), Organisational learning: a review of the literature with implications for HRD professionals, *Human Resource Quarterly*, Vol. 3, no. 1, 2-49.
- Donate, M.J., Canales, J.I., (2012), A new approach to the concept of knowledge strategy, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 16, no. 1, 22-44.
- Dweck, C.S., Leggett, E.L., (1988), A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality, *Psychological Review*, Vol. 95, 256-273.
- Dyson, R. G., Bryant, J., Morecroft, J., O'Brien, F., (1998), The Strategic Development Process, In: Dyson, R. G., O'Brien, F. A., (Eds), *Strategic Development: Methods and Models*, Wiley.
- Farrell, M.A., (2001), Developing a market-oriented learning organization, *Australian Journal of Management*, Vol. 25, no. 2, 201-22.
- Felix T., Mavondo, J., Chimhanzi J.S., (2005), Learning orientation and market orientation, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 39, no. 11/12, 1235 - 1263.
- Ferraresi, A.A., Quandt, C.O., dos Santos, S.A., Frega, J.R., (2012), Knowledge Management and Strategic Orientation: leveraging innovativeness and performance, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 16, no. 5, 688-701.
- Galer, G., van der Heijden. K., (1992), The Learning Organization: How Planners Create Organizational Learning, *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, Vol. 10, no. 6, 5-12.
- García-Morales, V.J., Jiménez-Barrionuevo, M.M., Gutiérrez-Gutiérrez, L., (2012), Transformational leadership influence on organizational performance through organizational learning and innovation, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65, no. 7, 1040-1050.
- Gatignon, H., Xuereb, J.M., (1997), Strategic orientation of the firm and new product performance, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 34, 77-90.
- Gill, S.J., (2009), *Developing a Learning Culture in Nonprofit Organizations*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Grant, R.M., (1996), Toward a knowledge-based theory of the firm, *Strategic Management Journal*, 77, 109-122.
- Grant, R.M., (2003), Strategic planning in a turbulent environment: evidence from the oil majors, *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 24, no. 6, 491-517.
- Green, K.M., Covin, J.G., Slevin, D.P., (2008), Exploring the relationship between strategic reactivity and entrepreneurial orientation: The role of structure-style fit, *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 23, 356-383.
- Grinstein, A., (2008), The relationships between market orientation and alternative strategic orientations A meta-analysis, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 42, no. 1/2, 115-134.
- Hakala, H., (2013), Entrepreneurial and learning orientation: effects on growth and profitability in the software sector, *Baltic Journal of Management*, Vol. 8, no. 1, 102 - 118.
- Huber, G.P., (1991), Organizational Learning: The Contributing Processes and the Literatures, *Organization Science*, Vol. 2, 88-115.
- Hunt, S.D., Morgan, R.M., (1996), The Resource-Advantage Theory of Competition: Dynamics, Path Dependencies, and Evolutionary Dimensions, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 60, 107-114.
- Hurley, R.F., Hult, G.T.M., (1998), Innovation, market orientation, and organizational learning: An integration and empirical examination, *Journal of Marketing*, 62, 42-54.
- Jacobson, R., (1992), The 'Austrian' School of Strategy, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 17, 782-807.
- Kim, W.C., Mauborgne, R. (2005), *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make Competition Irrelevant*, Harvard Business School Press, Cambridge.
- Kohli, A.K., Jaworski, B.J., (1990), Market orientation: the construct, research propositions, and managerial implications, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54, no. 2, 1-18.
- Kraus, S., Kauranen, I., (2009), Strategic management and entrepreneurship: friends or foes?, *International Journal of Business Science and Applied Management*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 37-50.
- Kropp, F., Lindsay, N.J., Shoham, A., (2006), Entrepreneurial, market, and learning orientations and international entrepreneurial business venture performance in South African firms, *International Marketing Review*, 23, 504-523.

- Lopez, S.P., Peon, J.M.M., Ordas, C.J.V., (2005), Organizational learning as a determining factor in business performance, *The Learning Organization*, Vol. 12, no.3, 227-245.
- Lumpkin, G.T., Lichtenstein, B.B., (2005), The role of organizational learning in the opportunity-recognition process, *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, Vol. 29, no. 4, 451-72.
- Lynn, G.S., Skov, R.B., Abel, K.D., (1999), Practices that support team learning and their impact on speed of market and new product success, *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 16, 439-454.
- March, J.G., (1991), Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning, *Organization Science*, Vol. 2, 71-87.
- Miles, M.P., Arnold, D.R., (1991). The relationship between market orientation and entrepreneurial orientation, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, Vol. 15, no. 4, 49-65.
- Miles, R., Snow, C., (1978), *Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
- Mintzberg, H., (1994), The fall and rise of strategic planning, *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 72, no. 1, 107-114.
- Narver, J.C., Slater, S.F., (1990), The effect of a market orientation on business profitability, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54, no. 4, 20-35.
- Patterson, M.G., West, M.A., Shackleton, V.J., Dawson, J.F., Lawthom, R., Maitlis, S., Robinson, D.L., Wallace, A.M., (2005), Validating the organizational climate measure: links to managerial practices, productivity and innovation, *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, Vol. 26, no. 4, 379-408.
- Porter, M., (1980), *Competitive Strategy*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Sadler-Smith, E., Spicer, D.P., Chaston, I., (2001), Learning orientations and growth in smaller firms, *Long Range Planning*, Vol. 34, 139-58.
- Schein, E., (1996), Culture: the missing concept in organisational studies, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 41, no. 2, 229-40.
- Senge, P.M., (1990), *The Fifth Discipline*, Doubleday, New York, NY.
- Sinkula, J.M., Baker, W., Noordewier, T.G., (1997), A Framework for Market-Based Organizational Learning: Linking Values, Knowledge and Behavior, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 25, 305-318.
- Stiles, P., (2001), The impact of the board on strategy: An empirical examination, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 38, no. 5, 627-650.
- Voss, G., Voss, Z., (2000), Strategic orientation and firm performance in an artistic environment, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 64, no. 1, 67-83.
- Wei Hin, C., Bohari, A. M., Isa, F. M., Maddin, A. M., (2013), Assessing The Model of Wheelen and Hunger (2008) Model of Internal Environmental Scanning and Its Application to the Small Medium Enterprise in Malaysia, *Asian Journal of Business and Management Sciences*, Vol. 2, no. 8, 24-33.
- Weisberg, R.W., (1999), Creativity and knowledge: A challenge to theories, In: Sternberg, R.J. (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity*, 226-250, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Zack, M.H., (2002), Developing a Knowledge Strategy: Epilogue, In: Bontis, N., Choo, C.W., (Eds), *The Strategic Management of Intellectual Capital Knowledge: A Collection of Readings*, Oxford University Press.
- Zhao, Y., Li, Lee, S.H., Chen, L.B., (2011), Entrepreneurial Orientation, Organizational Learning, and Performance: Evidence From China, *Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, March, 293-317.