ENTREPRENEURS' CULTURE, NETWORKING, GENDER AND EDUCATION AFFECT THEIR EXPORTING: A CROSS NATIONAL COMPARISON

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ABSTRAC

Entrepreneurs' exporting is embedded in their advisory networks, culture, gender and education. The main hypotheses are that networking, gender, education and culture affect exporting in the way that networking affects exporting positively; gender affects exporting, in the way that male have more exporting than female; education affects exporting in the way that educated entrepreneurs have more exporting than less educated entrepreneurs; and culture affects exporting in the way that secular- rational culture benefits exporting more than traditional culture. These hypotheses are tested with a representative sample of 23,508 entrepreneurs in 53 countries surveyed in Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and national level data on culture from the World Values Survey. Hierarchical linear mixed modeling shows that networking, secular-rational culture and education affect exporting positively while gender has no effect on exporting. Education, secular-rational culture and gender (male) reinforce the effect of networking on exporting.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, World Values Survey.

Acknowledgements:

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor provided the data. Responsibility for analysis and interpretation rests with the author.

INTRODUCTION

With global attention to entrepreneurship, study of entrepreneurs' activities such as their networking and their performance is important. On the other hand, entrepreneurs' characteristics like their background and also their culture matter for their international activities like their exporting.

Scholars consider that entrepreneurs are not acting alone but together with others and their activities are within their networks. Through these networks, entrepreneurs share information, know-how, creative ideas, access to finance, access to skills, emotional support and social legitimacy which bring them opportunities for their business (Acs and Audretsch, 2000; Klyver, 2011). These opportunities which are embedded in their active networks affect their firm performance e.g. exporting (Terjesen and Hessels, 2009).

In order to be able to export, entrepreneurs need some kind of competitive advantage such as unique resources or innovative abilities, because they have to adapt their products or services to foreign markets (Hessels and Stel, 2011). Exports result in growth of firms and their home countries' economies by improving a nation's foreign exchange reserves, developing national industry and creating jobs (Lu and Beamish, 2001; Terjesen and Hessels, 2009). Exports aid to create value, and access new knowledge and technologies abroad (Yeoh, 2004) and expand into new, foreign markets (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Zahra et al., 1999). Governments support cross-border entrepreneurship and in particular exports to increase national wealth and to improve international competitiveness of the national economy (OECD, 1997).
Entrepreneurs' background like their higher levels of education is reflected in greater quantities of knowledge capital and is likely to be positively related to the attitude to create products and services which can be exported. At the individual level, education is a key aspect of an entrepreneur's human capital and entrepreneurs who have higher levels of education are more likely to identify opportunities (Davidsson & Honig, 2003) and have ambitions to grow their firms (Autio, 2007; Terjesen and Hessels, 2009).

Other scholars also believe that individual-specific factors mainly relate to characteristics of the entrepreneur. Examples of factors that have been found to positively affect internationalization are demographic factors, such as age (Westhead, 1995) which may be considered as a proxy for accumulated experience (Basile, et al., 2003; Hessels and Parker, 2013) the level of education (Simpson and

Kujawa,1974), and factors relating to individual's knowledge and experience such as the entrepreneurs' international business experience and knowledge of foreign institutions, such as knowledge of foreign laws, norms, standards and languages (Bloodgood, et al.,1996; Eriksson, et al., 1997; Oviatt and McDougall, 1995; Reuber and Fischer, 1997).
Many studies show that the level of male entrepreneurial activity is still higher compared to that of women. Cross-national empirical studies report significant differences in female and male entrepreneurial activity, with various factors affecting business performance across countries (Tsyganova and Shirokova, 2010).

There is a widespread belief that cultural differences can be a powerful determinant of variation in entrepreneurial behaviour across countries (see Hayton et al., 2002 for a review of studies on culture and entrepreneurship). (Klyver and Grant, 2010). National culture consists of the underlying value systems that are specific to a group or society and motivate individuals to behave in certain ways (Hofstede, 1998). In recent years, studies show that mere attention to the dimensions of national culture (e.g. power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity and individualism-collectivism) is not a comprehensive approach to study the role of culture on entrepreneurial behaviour. Beside theses dimensions of national culture, secular-rational vs. traditional, have become important to scholars as well (Aramand, 2013). According to World Values Survey, secular-rational values reflect the differences in religions in different societies. Societies near the traditional spectrum emphasize the importance of family relations and traditional family values, and reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride, and a

nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values are opposite (2013). Countries with traditional culture include African countries, Latin American countries and some parts of Asia, while secular rational culture includes European countries and North America.
This study examines exporting as shaped by both micro-level and macro-level conditions. At the microlevel, the focus is on networking, gender, education as they impact exporting. At the macro-level, the focus is on culture as it impacts exporting.

So in next section, prior research on networking, exporting and culture will be reviewed. Then hypotheses about effects of networking, gender, education and culture on exporting, and effects of networking together with gender, education and culture on exporting, will be described. After introducing design, data and variables, hypotheses will be tested and results will be discussed.
The value of this proposed research is that the focus is on entrepreneurs in 53 countries which is a huge sample of entrepreneurs comparing to earlier studies, so the results can be generalized to the world.

Prior research

As pinpointed in the introduction, entrepreneurs' background like their gender, education and their culture might affect their networking and also their performance.
So many researchers studied the effect of entrepreneurial networks and their background on their firm performance especially on their exporting. For example author A studied the effect of innovativeness and networking on exporting and also how networking enhances the impact of innovativeness on exporting based on Global Entrepreneurship Monitor data on firms in operating phases in 67 countries. They measured firms networking in seven kinds of collaboration: collaboration on production, supply, marketing, new customers, new products, new products for new customers and effectiveness. They also measured exporting based on percentage of customers that normally live outside the country. They found that firm's innovativeness has a positive effect on exporting. Networking affect exporting positively; and networking moderates the effect of innovation on exporting. So firm's innovation get a boost on exporting through networking (Author A).

Author B surveyed a similar research with a sample of entrepreneurs including owner-managers and starters in 14 countries using Global Entrepreneurship Monitor data. They studied the effect of total networking and also five different kinds of networking on exporting. They measured networking in five different spheres: networking for advice in the private sphere, with spouse, parents, other family members and also friends, work-place sphere with work-colleagues, boss, starter and business-mentor, the professional sphere with lawyer, accountant, bank, investor, researcher and counselor, the market sphere with collaborators, competitors, suppliers and customers and internationally with someone in another country and someone from abroad. Total networking is the sum of five specific networks. Exporting also measured based on percentage of customers that live outside the country. Results show that total networking, international networking, professional networking, have a significant and

positive effect on exporting. There was no effect of private networking and work place networking on exporting (Author B).

Author C in 2012 used a sample of 471 firms in Denmark whose owner-managers were surveyed in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and a survey with the same questions that were conducted specifically for focusing on firms in industry in Denmark. The survey asked for each firm's collaborative relations, innovation, export and current size and expected future size. They found that firms benefit from their networking. Their collaborative relationships with others in their operations improve their performance in terms of innovation, exporting and expectation for growth. Moreover, these dimensions of performance tend to reinforce one another in the way that innovation promotes export and growth-expectation. (Author C).

Author D studied 20857 nascent and established entrepreneurs in 42 countries sampled in Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2009-2011. They found that entrepreneurs' networks, especially their professional networks, enhances their innovation, exporting and expectations for growth, both directly and in combination with national characteristics, e.g. culture (Author D).

Other scholars studied the entrepreneurs' networking for advice in private and public spheres, as influenced by gender, age and education in the context of culture using Global Entrepreneurship Monitor data in Denmark and 14 countries representative of the Middle East and North Africa. They found that entrepreneurs are networking in the private sphere with family and friends, especially in traditional culture in Middle East and North Africa, and are networking in public spheres, especially in the secular-rational culture in Denmark. Male entrepreneurs network broader than female entrepreneurs, especially in the public sphere, whereas women network more intensely in the private sphere. Age influences networking in the way that networking in the private sphere is more extensive among young than among older entrepreneurs. Education influences networking in the way that networking in the public sphere is especially extensive among educated entrepreneurs (Ashourizadeh and Schøtt, 2013).

Schøtt and his colleague studied a sample of 35,430 entrepreneurs in 42 countries using Global Entrepreneurship Monitor data. They hypothesized effects of culture, (rationality and trust) upon the properties of the networks namely size, diversity, private network, market network, work-place network, professional network and international network. Cultural effects on networking were tested as macro-to micro effects in two level mixed linear models with fixed effects of national levels of rationality and trust and individual-level variables as controls and random effects of country, where the dependent variables are the properties of the networks. They found that rationality promotes diversity of networks and prominence of work-place network, professional network, market network and also international network, but reduces prominence of the private network. Trust increases size of the networks, diversity of networks, prominence of market network and also work-place and professional network, but reduces prominence of the private network. They also found that the gender difference is wider in traditional culture than in secular-rational culture (Schøtt and Cheraghi, 2012).

Klyver and Christensen studied a representative sample of entrepreneurs operating at three succeeding phases of the entrepreneurial process using Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) data and a follow-up survey in 2003. They investigated if differences in social

network structures can be found between exportoriented and domestic-oriented entrepreneurs. Results indicated that export-oriented entrepreneurs activate larger personal networks with a higher proportion of business relations compared to domestic-oriented entrepreneurs. In their survey export was measured based on whether or not an entrepreneur expects to export or is exporting, depending on whether the entrepreneur operates in the firm emergence phase, the young business phase or the established business phase. Because entrepreneurs in the emergence phase still have not started a business, they have intention to export, whereas in the later phases where the business has been started, they are real export. If entrepreneurs were not export-oriented, they were coded '0'; if they were export-oriented, they were coded '1'. For measuring social networks, they employed the name generator approach to ascertain the composition of entrepreneurs' activated social networks. They asked entrepreneurs, "Identify up to five persons with whom you have discussed your (opportunity; business), and if you have discussed your (opportunity; business) with more than five persons, then the five persons who have influenced you the most." This resulted in a size measure from one to five (2007).
So entrepreneurs' performance especially their exporting activities benefit from their involving in large networks and it also depends on entrepreneurs' background.

Hypotheses

Based on the tradition of research on networks and exporting, we shall here use the conceptual model in Figure 1.

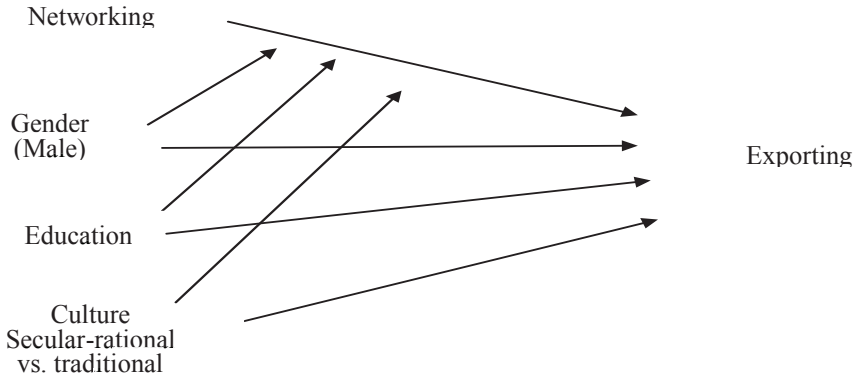

Figure 1
Conceptual Model

According to this conceptual model, networking, gender, education and culture have a distinct effect on exporting. The model controls for characteristics of entrepreneurs, and also for country.
The above review leads us to specify hypotheses about exporting as follows:

H1: Networking affects exporting positively.

H2: Exporting is affected by entrepreneurs' gender, in the way that male have more exporting than female.

H3: Exporting is affected by entrepreneurs' education; in the way that more educated entrepreneurs have more exporting than less educated entrepreneurs.

H4: Exporting is affected by entrepreneurs' culture, in the way that secular- rational culture benefits exporting more than traditional culture.

H5: Entrepreneurs' gender moderates the effect of networking on exporting, in the way that male entrepreneurs' networking benefit exporting more than female entrepreneurs.

H6: Entrepreneurs' education moderates the effect of networking on exporting, in the way that educated entrepreneurs' networking benefit exporting more than less educated entrepreneurs.

H7: The effect of entrepreneurs' networking on exporting is different in secular- rational culture versus traditional culture; in the way that entrepreneurs' networking in secular-rational culture benefits exporting more than in traditional culture.

Design and data: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

Sample is 23,508 entrepreneurs (owner-managers of established firms) in 53 countries who have participated in GEM survey in 2009-2011. These countries are Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan,
Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, Poland, Portugal,

Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Singapore, Syria, Taiwan, Tonga, Thailand,

Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Yemen.

The GEM survey of individuals can be considered a two-stage sample of the adults in the world. In the first stage countries have been sampled by self-selection; when researchers within some countries formed national teams that joined the GEM consortium. In each such participating country, the second stage was to draw an approximate national probability sample of adults and in interviews identify entrepreneurs.

GEM fairly randomly sampled adults in the population and identified owner-managers who reported on their firms. Thus the sample is fairly representative of firms in these countries. The representativeness enables generalization of the findings to the population of firms in these countries.

National-level measures of culture are available from the World Values Survey (2013). Each surveyed country is scored on the dimension or continuum from extremely secular-rational culture to extremely traditional culture (for some countries the score was missing, so a score was estimated according to neighboring countries).

The unit of analysis is an entrepreneur. The method for analyzing the data is quantitative. For testing hypotheses, I use hierarchical mixed linear modeling in SPSS.

Variables:

In the model there are three types of variables: independent, dependent and control variables. The independent variables are networking, culture and gender and education. Networking around the entrepreneur is measured by asking whether or not advice was received from each of twenty possible advisors. Networking is the sum of five specific networks namely private network, market network, workplace network, professional network and international network.

Culture is measured as secular-rational versus traditional culture in World Values Survey.

Education is measured as years of schooling.

The dependent variable is exporting. Exporting is measured on proportion of customers that live abroad.

Control variables are characteristics of the entrepreneur like motivation, self-efficacy, opportunity perception, risk-willingness, sole proprietor, age, and country.

Control variables are the following:
Gender dichotomy coded 1 for male and 0 for female.
Age of entrepreneur logarithm of number of years of age.
Education level of education, standardized in each national sample.
Self-efficacy dichotomy coded 1 for self-efficacious and 0 for not.
Opportunity perception dichotomy coded 1 if recognizing opportunity and 0 if not.
Risk-willingness dichotomy coded 1 if not fearing failure and 0 if fearing failure.
Motivation dichotomy coded 1 if motivated by opportunity, and 0 if motivated by necessity.
Sole proprietor dichotomy coded 0 if joint ownership and 1 if sole ownership.

Entrepreneurs' networking with advisors

In the survey, an entrepreneur's network was measured by asking whether or not advice was received from each of twenty possible advisors. The questions for measuring a network were designed so as to be applicable to entrepreneurs in all phases of venture creation, with concern for the interviewing-time involved and simple enough for respondents unfamiliar with surveys. A list of potential advisors derived from the literature and from previously undertaken surveys were selected, and pretested in five countries in
2008. The pretest helped to finalize the list of 20 possible advisors for the surveys used here (Author B; Author D).

Each entrepreneur was asked,

Various people may give you advice on your business. During the last year, have you received advice from any of the following? Spouse? Parents? Other family? Friends? Work-colleagues? Boss? Starter?
Business-mentor? Researcher? Investor? Bank? Lawyer? Accountant? Counselor? Collaborators? Competitors? Suppliers? Customers? Someone in another country? Someone from abroad?

Networking is the sum of five specific networks namely private network, market network, work-place network, professional network and international network.

Exporting

The question about exporting in the questionnaire is:
What proportion of your customers will normally live outside the country?
Exporting is thus measured by a percentage. For analysis we measure export on a logarithmic scale, as the logarithm of the percentage (adding 1 before taking the log).
So the frequency of this variable is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Entrepreneurs' exporting (N=22,306 entrepreneurs)

Entrepreneurs' exporting	Percent of entrepreneurs
0 % of customers are abroad	69 %
1% to10% of customers are abroad	19 %
10% to 25% of customers are abroad	4 %
25% to50% of customers are abroad	3 %
50% to75% of customers are abroad	2 %
75% to 95% of customers are abroad	1 %
95% to100% of customers are abroad	2 %
Tota	100 %

Entrepreneurs differ in their exporting. Table 1 show that only 31 percent of entrepreneurs have exporting.

Entrepreneurs' culture

Entrepreneurs are different in their culture. Some are secular-rational and some are traditional. Secular rational culture mostly includes Europe and USA while traditional culture includes Africa, Latin America and some parts of Asia.

Table 2
Entrepreneurs' culture in countries

Country	Culture
Sweden	1,48

Denmark	1,34
Czech Republic	1,18
China	1,15
Latvia	1,09
Korea	0,98
….	
Jamaica	-1,6
Egypt	-1,65
Angola	-1,70
Venezuela	-1,71
Colombia	-1,75
Trinidad and Tobago	-1,83

As seen in Table 2, Sweden, Denmark, Czech Republic, China, Latvia and Korea are highest in secular- rational culture among 53 countries, respectively. Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Venezuela, Angola, Egypt, Jamaica etc. are stronger in traditional culture among 53 countries, respectively.

Exporting differs by networking, gender, education and culture

Exporting differs by networking. Table 3 shows that the entrepreneurs in large networks have more exporting.

Table 3

Entrepreneurs, according to network and exporting (N=20,807 entrepreneurs)

Exporing	**Small network**	**Large network**
Low exporting	74%	62%
High exporting	26%	38%
Total	100%	100%

Exporting differs by gender, as well. Table 4 shows that male entrepreneurs have more exporting than female entrepreneurs.

Table 4

Entrepreneurs, according to gender and exporting (N=22,299 entrepreneurs)

Exporing	**Male**	**Female**
Low exporting	67%	71%
High exporting	32%	29%
Total	100%	100%

Exporting differs by education. Table 5 shows that entrepreneurs with high level of education have more exporting than entrepreneurs with low level of education.

Table 5
Entrepreneurs, according to exporting and education (N=21,958 entrepreneurs)

	Low education	**Middle level education**	**High level education**
Low exporting	78%	70%	57%
High exporting	21%	30%	43%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Exporting appears to differ a little by culture. Entrepreneurs in secular- rational culture have slightly more exporting than entrepreneurs in traditional culture.

Table 6
Entrepreneurs, according to culture and exporting (N=22,306 entrepreneurs)

Culture	**Secular-rational**	**Traditional**
Low exporting	68%	70%
High exporting	32%	30%
Total	100%	100%

Testing hypotheses:

Exporting affected by networking, gender, education, culture and characteristics of entrepreneur, and by country:

We had hypothesized that exporting is affected by networking, culture, gender and education. A hierarchical linear mixed model, which is similar to, but better than linear regression, makes it possible to ascertain the effect on innovation from each condition, while holding other conditions constant (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). The data on entrepreneurs nested within countries are in this sense hierarchical. The effect of a numerical independent variable upon the dependent numerical variable is modeled as linear. Effects of the conditions of interest (networks) and also of control variables (for attributes of entrepreneurs) are expressed as coefficients that are fixed by reality, and therefore called fixed effect coefficients. Coefficients for country effects are not fixed in same sense, but they depend on the more or less random sample of countries and are therefore called random effect coefficients. So the model has a mix of fixed and random effects, and is therefore called a mixed model. This model also takes into account that behaviour within each country is somewhat similar, an autocorrelation that is controlled for in the hierarchical linear mixed model. The effects upon exporting are estimated in Table 7 (based on the 53 countries with 23,508 entrepreneurs). Each variable is standardized, so the fixed effects are indicated by standardized coefficients, which enables comparisons among the effects.

Table 7
Exporting affected by networking, gender, education, culture and characteristics of entrepreneur, and by country (N = 23,508 entrepreneurs)

	Standardized coefficient	Probablity-value
Network size	0.105	0.000
Gender male	-0.0035	0.64
Education	0.073	0.000
Culture secular rational vs. traditional	0.099	0.048
Age of entrepreneur	0.0002	0.49
Self-efficacy	0.019	0.009
Opportunity perception	0.016	0.016
Risk-willingness	-0.009	0.256
Motivation: opportunity vs. necessity	0.037	0.000
Sole proprietor	0.039	0.000
Intercept	0.137	0.006
Countries, a coefficient of each country	Not listed	

Table 7 shows that networking affects exporting positively, standardized coefficient is positive and fairly big and probability value is significant, supports Hypothesis 1.

Gender has no effect on exporting, standardized coefficient is negative and probability value is insignificant, does not supports Hypothesis 2.

Education affects exporting positively, standardized coefficient is positive and probability value is significant, supports Hypothesis 3.

Culture affects exporting positively, standardized coefficient is positive (fairly big) and probability value is significant, supports Hypothesis 4.

Exporting affected by networking, gender, education, culture and characteristics of entrepreneur, and by country (with interaction effects of networks with culture, gender and education):

We had hypothesized that networking together with gender, in combination, adds benefit to exporting, Hypothesis 5. We had also hypothesized that, likewise, networking together with education, in combination, adds benefit to exporting, Hypothesis 6. And finally we had hypothesized that, networking together with culture, in combination, adds benefit to

exporting, Hypothesis 7. These three hypotheses are tested by including interaction terms, the product of the gender, education and culture with networking,

Table 8

Effects on exporting from networking, gender, education, culture and other characteristics of entrepreneurs and by country (N=23,508 entrepreneurs)

	Standardized coefficient	**Probablity-value**
Network size	0.106	0.000
Gender male	-0.003	0.34
Education	0.074	0.000
Culture secular rational vs. traditional	0.098	0.049
Network *gender	0.015	0.035
Network *education	0.039	0.000
Network *culture	-0.017	0.052
Age of entrepreneur	-0.0004	0.96
Self-efficacy	0.019	0.0075
Opportunity perception	0.017	0.015
Risk-willingness	-0.008	0.256
Motivation: opportunity vs. necessity	0.037	0.000
Proprietorship	0.038	0.000
Intercept	0.135	0.007
Countries, a coefficient of each country	Not listed	

According to table 8, interaction effect of network and gender is significant and positive, supports Hypothesis 5.

Interaction effect of network and education is significant and positive, supports Hypothesis 6.

Interaction effect of network and culture is significant but negative.

Estimated effects are shown in figure 2.

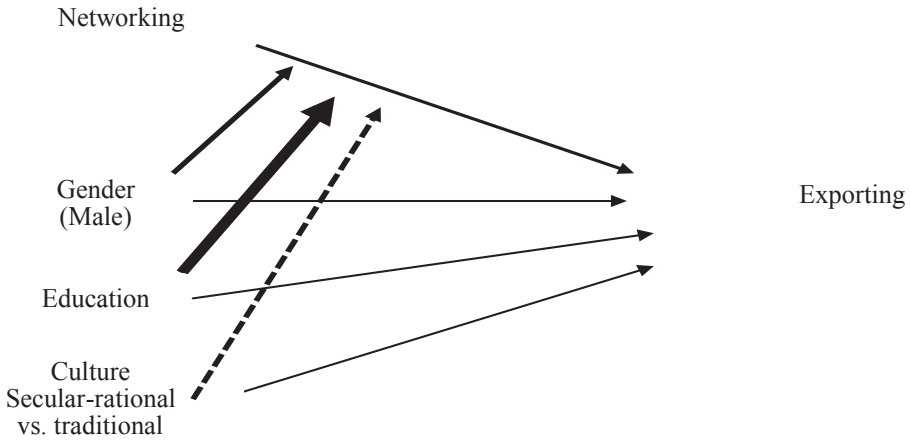

Figure 2
Estimated effects of networks, gender, education and culture on exporting

The thickness of an arrow represents the magnitude of the effect as indicated by the standardized coefficient. Positive effects are solid arrows and negative effects are dashed arrows.

CONCLUSION

By using data collected from 23,508 entrepreneurs in 53 countries from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and World Values Survey in 2009-2011, seven hypotheses were investigated. This study tested hypotheses about the effect of entrepreneurs' networking, gender, education and culture on exporting, and also the moderating effects of gender, education and culture on the effect of networking on exporting.
Hierarchical mixed linear modeling shows that networking affects exporting positively, supports the first Hypothesis; this means that entrepreneurs with extended networks, export more.

Gender has no effect on exporting so does not supports Hypothesis 2. This means that there is no gender difference on exporting.

Education affects exporting positively, supports Hypothesis 3; meaning that more educated entrepreneurs have more exporting than less educated entrepreneurs.

Culture affects exporting positively, supports fourth Hypothesis; so secular- rational culture benefits exporting more than traditional culture.

Interaction effect of network and gender is significant and positive; meaning that entrepreneurs' gender moderates the effect of networking on exporting, in the way that male entrepreneurs' networking benefit exporting more than female entrepreneurs; supports Hypothesis 5.

Interaction effect of network and education is significant and positive, meaning that entrepreneurs' education moderates the effect of networking on exporting, in the way that educated entrepreneurs' networking benefit exporting more than less educated entrepreneurs, supports Hypothesis 6.
Interaction effect of network and culture is significant but negative; it means that the effect of entrepreneurs' networking on exporting is different in the way that the effect of entrepreneurs' networking on exporting in traditional culture is more than secular- rational culture.
Other characteristics of entrepreneurs like their self-efficacy, opportunity perception, motivation and proprietorship effect exporting positively.

Directions for future research

With regards to other cultural dimensions further than traditional vs. secular-rational culture, it would be interesting to examine other dimensions of culture like Hofstede five dimensions, Schwartz ten dimensions, etc. Future studies might also consider other environmental national variables like trust.

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