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*ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW IN THE
SPELL DATABASE¹*

**ORIENTAÇÃO EMPREENDEDORA: UMA REVISÃO BIBLIOMÉTRICA NA
BASE DE DADOS DA SPELL**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the national academic production on Entrepreneurial Orientation. This is a descriptive and exploratory study, with the purpose of presenting data obtained from publications in the Spell database, with a time frame defined between 2010 and 2020. Thus, it is clear that, although the field of study is recent, there is a growing interest among researchers, which increases the number of publications year after year, in several journals. The deepening of the issue reveals the relevance of the topic for organizations that seek to stimulate entrepreneurship. This work may contribute to future studies, supporting the debate on EO.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, organizations

RESUMO

Este trabalho tem por objeto de estudo a investigação acerca da produção acadêmica nacional sobre a Orientação Empreendedora. Trata-se de um estudo descritivo e exploratório, tendo por finalidade apresentar dados obtidos a partir de publicações da base de dados Spell, com marco temporal definido entre 2010 e 2020. Com isso, constata-se que, embora o campo de estudo seja recente, há um crescente interesse dos pesquisadores, que eleva o número de publicações ano após ano, em vários periódicos. O aprofundamento da questão revela a pertinência do tema para as organizações que buscam estimular o empreendedorismo. Este trabalho poderá contribuir para futuros estudos, dando suporte para o debate da OE.

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Palavras-chave: empreendedorismo, orientação empreendedora, organizações

INTRODUCTION

The complexity observed in economic relations in a globalized world is challenging for market participants, whether for organizations themselves or for employees in general. The relentless pursuit of information and mastery of emerging technologies requires organizations to adopt a profile consistent with these changes. In a context marked by intense competition among companies — whether small, medium, or large — entrepreneurship is essential for generating and ensuring competitive advantage, as well as for the survival of organizations.

In this sense, the practice of entrepreneurship within organizations should be encouraged. To achieve this, the company environment must be characterized by a culture that fosters entrepreneurial practices. In other words, entrepreneurship and the pursuit of innovation, even if incremental, should be institutionalized practices within organizations. Thus, the term entrepreneurial orientation (EO) emerges. In general, entrepreneurial orientation can be understood as the incorporation of entrepreneurial values within a company so that entrepreneurial practice becomes a constant aspect of its performance.

Entrepreneurial Orientation is a concept inserted within the scope of entrepreneurship research and practice and is related to the methods, practices, managerial decision-making styles, and values used to ensure that organizations conduct their activities in an entrepreneurial manner (LUMPKIN; DESS, 1996). This entrepreneurial orientation is guided by five dimensions, namely: innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, autonomy, and competitive aggressiveness (LUMPKIN et al., 2013). When understood and measured, these dimensions provide important tools in the process of encouraging entrepreneurship within organizations, which may achieve better financial results (GUPTA; DUTTA, 2016).



The degree of EO within each organization varies according to external and/or internal causes. Entrepreneurial behavior is particularly related to the organizational environment, where the personality and attitude of the leader are significant factors; however, organizational and environmental factors that promote or hinder the development of an entrepreneurial culture are fundamentally decisive in this definition (LUMPKIN; DESS, 1996).

Based on this context of relevance in obtaining competitive advantages within organizations and the importance of entrepreneurship for organizational success, this bibliometric study seeks to outline an overview of academic production related to entrepreneurial orientation during the past decade (2010–2020). In this sense, the objective of this work is to conduct a bibliometric review of entrepreneurial orientation. This proposed bibliometric review makes it possible to investigate which trends, concepts, and methods are most frequently addressed in publications on EO and to provide a systematic structure of academic production on the subject that may support future research. In this regard, the mapping, analysis, and monitoring of scientific research on Entrepreneurial Orientation in Brazil contribute theoretically to discussions related to the topic by identifying journals, authors, themes, and research methods being used in scientific production on entrepreneurial orientation. Furthermore, from a practical perspective, it contributes to clarifying components of entrepreneurial orientation that can be used and implemented in different organizations.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION

The study of entrepreneurship and its various definitions has increasingly become a research topic (GARCIA; ANDRADE, 2022). The work of Garcia and Andrade (2022) demonstrates how the field has evolved over the years, both in terms of the number of published studies and the emergence of new themes



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within the broad field of entrepreneurship research. As it gained prominence, entrepreneurship acquired theoretical and conceptual foundations. The subject encompasses various areas of knowledge and can be studied from different perspectives. The breadth of the topic is evident even in the earliest uses of the term “entrepreneurship” by Richard Cantillon and Jean Baptiste Say in the first decades of the eighteenth century, where Filion (1999) identifies that these authors were interested not only in economics itself but also in business development and management.

Entrepreneurship is not an exclusive field of study within economics or business administration. Other areas, such as sociology and psychology, also study the phenomenon. Thus, the lack of a single definition and the fluid boundaries of the field of entrepreneurship contribute to the study of the subject (FILION, 1999), and the topic gains legitimacy through its different approaches (BRUYAT; JULIEN, 2001).

There is an understanding within the academic community that entrepreneurship is not limited to the creation of new organizations but also includes the development of new procedures that can maximize productivity and innovation in existing organizations. Entrepreneurial behavior can be observed individually among employees within companies through creativity and initiative, fostering renewal or innovation in existing processes. The practice of entrepreneurship by employees was identified and documented by Dornelas (2003) under the term corporate entrepreneurship.

For corporate entrepreneurship to occur, however, the company must transform the business environment into one that is favorable to entrepreneurship. Among these transformations, the establishment of incentives — through psychological encouragement, recognition, and financial rewards — can be highlighted as a driving force in adapting the environment for development, according to Hisrich and Peters (2004). In addition, the company



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must create a culture based on entrepreneurial values and provide a structure that supports entrepreneurship. Organizations must therefore develop an entrepreneurial orientation.

The topic of entrepreneurial orientation has increasingly attracted the attention of scholars over recent years, gaining greater prominence from 2013 onward (SILVEIRA; MARTINS, 2016). This is due to the fact that entrepreneurial orientation is capable of promoting organizational development through processes, practices, and activities implemented based on strategic decision-making and the development of entrepreneurial behavior (LIMA; DANTAS; TEIXEIRA; ALMEIDA, 2018).

According to Silveira and Martins (2016), there is growing interest in understanding the multiple aspects present in Entrepreneurial Orientation, as well as its direct and indirect consequences. For this reason, EO has become a focal construct on the agenda of strategy scholars and policymakers. Therefore, the authors presented a survey of the definitions found in the literature regarding Entrepreneurial Orientation.



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Chart 1: Definitions of EO

Authors	Definition of EO
Mintzberg (1973)	"In the entrepreneurial mode, strategic decision-making is dominated by the active search for new opportunities," as well as "dramatic leaps forward in the face of uncertainty" (p.45)
Khandwalla (1976/1977)	"The entrepreneurial style (management) is characterized by bold, risky, and aggressive decision-making" (p.25)
Miller; Friesen (1982)	"The entrepreneurial model applies to firms that innovate regularly and boldly while taking considerable risks in their product-market strategies" (p.5)
Miller (1983)	"An entrepreneurial firm is one that engages in product-market innovation, undertakes somewhat risky ventures, and is first to come up with 'proactive' innovations, 'beating competitors to the punch'" (p.771)
Morris; Paul (1987)	"A firm is entrepreneurial with decision-making norms that emphasize proactive and innovative strategies that contain an element of risk" (p.249)
Covin; Slevin (1989)	"Entrepreneurial firms are those in which top managers have entrepreneurial management styles, as evidenced by the firms' strategic decisions and operating management philosophies. Non-entrepreneurial or conservative firms are those in which top management style is decidedly risk-averse, non-innovative, passive, or reactive" (p.218)
Merz; Sauber (1995)	"... entrepreneurial orientation is defined as the firm's degree of proactiveness (aggressiveness) and its willingness to innovate and create new offerings" (p.554)
Lumpkin; Dess (1996)	Entrepreneurial orientation refers to the methods, practices, and managerial decision-making style used to act entrepreneurially. "As characterized by one or more dimensions: 'a propensity to act autonomously, a willingness to innovate and take risks, and a tendency to be aggressive toward competitors and proactive with regard to marketplace opportunities'" (p.136–137)
Zahra; Neubaum (1998)	EO is the "total sum of a firm's radical innovations, proactive strategic actions, and risk-taking activities that manifest in support of projects with uncertain outcomes" (p.124)
Voss; Voss; Moorman (2005)	"... we define EO as a firm-level disposition to engage in behaviors (risk-taking, innovativeness, proactiveness, autonomy, and competitive aggressiveness) that lead to changes in the organization or marketplace" (p.1134)
Avlonitis; Salavou (2007)	"EO constitutes an organizational phenomenon that reflects a managerial resource through which firms embark on proactive and aggressive initiatives to alter the competitive landscape in their favor" (p.567)
Cools; Van de Broeck (2007/2008)	"Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) refers to top management's strategy regarding innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking capability" (p.27)
Pearce; Fritz; Davis (2010)	"EO is a set of distinct, yet related behaviors that possess the qualities of innovativeness, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, risk-taking, and autonomy" (p.219)

Source: SILVEIRA; MARTINS, 2016.



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Entrepreneurial orientation was initially introduced by Miller in 1983 based on three concepts (LUMPKIN; DESS, 1996): risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness. Each of these concepts addresses organizational performance. Thus, risk-taking is understood as the ability to take risks in new circumstances where the possible outcomes are unknown; proactiveness is linked to the anticipation of the company's future needs; innovativeness is related to the ability to develop something new and/or restructure something that already exists (FRANÇA; SARAIVA; HASHIMOTO, 2012). However, in Mintzberg's work from 1973, concepts associated with Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) research can be found, linked to strategic business decision-making and theorized as a managerial disposition characterized by seeking different opportunities in an uncertain environment to achieve growth (SILVEIRA; MARTINS, 2016).

The entrepreneurial orientation approach proposed by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) includes two additional dimensions to provide a better understanding of organizational performance: autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. The combination of innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, autonomy, and competitive aggressiveness enables the development of good managerial practices within an organization. These actions are capable of stimulating entrepreneurial behavior in corporations that use the methods and techniques present in EO for decision-making (LUMPKIN; DESS, 1996; SILVEIRA; MARTINS, 2016).

The terms proactiveness, innovativeness, competitive aggressiveness, risk-taking, and autonomy are mentioned by all the authors presented in Chart 1 with the objective of defining Entrepreneurial Orientation. From this, we can understand that, in order to achieve success within a venture, managers are required to use EO to guide the organization. In this regard, Coura, Neto, Verwaal, and Oliveira (2018), in their research, compiled definitions of these



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terms that contribute to the development of entrepreneurial behavior oriented toward entrepreneurial orientation.

Chart 2: Definitions of the Terms that Contribute to EO Performance

Innovativeness is the process of introducing novelties into the organization through creativity and experimentation, focusing on investment in research and development, financial resources for innovation, and the opening of new markets, as well as achieving new technologies and processes that may result in unprecedented products and/or services.
Risk-taking can be defined as the organization's tendency to engage in risky projects with an aggressive posture, aiming to explore potential opportunities with the possibility of high returns, which require the acquisition of a large volume of financial resources focused on organizational growth.
Competitive aggressiveness reflects the posture of organizations in responding energetically and challengingly to competitors' actions, aiming to achieve competitive advantage with the objective of gaining market share through price reductions, advertising, product and/or service differentiation, an emphasis on long-term growth, as well as investments in or implementation of after-sales actions.
Autonomy can be defined as the freedom granted to individuals to make decisions without organizational constraints. It is characterized by the independence of the team to make decisions, bring forward new ideas or perspectives regarding unprecedented opportunities, without requiring a member of top management to approve or evaluate the measure beforehand.
Proactiveness can be defined as the execution of processes aimed at anticipating and acting upon future needs, advance planning oriented toward the emergence and resolution of problems, the search for new opportunities, entry into other markets, the introduction of innovative products and/or services, market monitoring, and changes in production techniques and technologies before competitors do so.

Source: COURA; NETO; VERWAAL; OLIVEIRA, 2018.

In view of this, entrepreneurial behavior in business organizations that exhibit a pattern oriented toward entrepreneurial orientation directly reflects on the strategy of effective management processes. An organization that is committed to the development of products and/or services is inclined to take risks and act aggressively in the market, which provides for independent decision-making and a vision of immediate action. This will allow the company to gain greater prominence in business practices (COURA; NETO; VERWAAL; OLIVEIRA, 2018). Therefore, EO is considered beneficial for organizations because it is positively correlated with financial growth and can enhance the ability to identify new opportunities, promote differentiation, and create competitive advantage (LIMA; DANTAS; TEIXEIRA; ALMEIDA, 2018).



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Entrepreneurial Orientation signals a path toward business innovation, and there is no single way to implement Entrepreneurial Orientation, since each organizational environment is unique. Therefore, the success of applying EO in a given company depends on the development of a plan capable of encompassing all factors present within the organization, from employee performance to profitable outcomes (FRANÇA; SARAIVA; HASHIMOTO, 2012).

Entrepreneurial Orientation involves entrepreneurship at the organizational level, considering its practices and methods, with the objective of providing innovation to the sector. To this end, it seeks to promote the creation and development of opportunities and foster the entrepreneurial initiative of managers and employees. Therefore, EO is concerned with using methods and practices that encourage employees to act entrepreneurially, facilitating the emergence of business ideas. This scenario contributes to strengthening management and its available resources. For business success, it is essential that a company's internal and external factors are well aligned with the unique characteristics of the organization and its leaders (SILVEIRA; MARTINS, 2016). Thus, companies with a well-developed Entrepreneurial Orientation possess a greater capacity to manage the adversities that may arise.

In this sense, it is important to recognize that the manager is not what makes business success possible; rather, it is the process present in business execution, as well as the organizational aspects that affect, motivate, or hinder its implementation. Therefore, understanding the entrepreneurial process and its management can contribute to identifying factors that improve Entrepreneurial Orientation (COURA; NETO; VERWAAL; OLIVEIRA, 2018).



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METHODOLOGY

Literature reviews are fundamental for knowledge construction and scientific work (BOTELHO; CUNHA; MACEDO, 2011). Reviews are important for mapping the literature related to a given topic. In addition, they allow researchers to establish initial contact with and become familiar with the subject they intend to study and investigate. From this perspective, a literature review makes it possible to identify research gaps, study methodologies, research problems and objectives, and the discussion of results (BENTO, 2012). Even for experienced researchers, literature reviews enable updates on a topic, since knowledge construction is dynamic.

There are different types of literature reviews, such as scoping reviews, metasyntheses, systematic reviews, integrative reviews, among others. In this study, a bibliometric literature review was chosen. Bibliometric review is characterized by its quantitative nature (PRADO et al., 2019). Through quantitative analyses of scientific production, bibliometrics makes it possible to analyze the structure, dynamics, evolution, and systematization of the literature on a given subject. Through a bibliometric review, it is possible to identify the central authors in a research field, the journals that publish the most, the frequency of publications per year, the most frequently used keywords, among other aspects. In addition, bibliometrics allows researchers to extrapolate quantitative results and make inferences about qualitative aspects of a field.

As with any review method, it is necessary to demonstrate the procedures used. For this study, the Spell database was used, a database that seeks to aggregate scientific production in Public and Business Administration, Accounting, and Tourism. In this sense, it is a database consistent with the research theme of this study. Subsequently, the search for articles was conducted using the expression “entrepreneurial orientation.” The expression had to appear in the title of the articles. Some filters were applied: only scientific

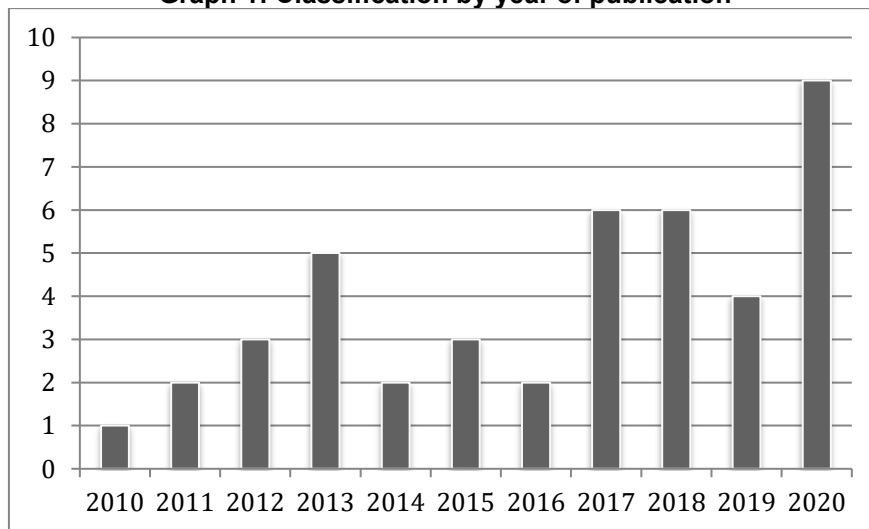


articles, in Portuguese, and only articles published between January 2010 and December 2020. This search resulted in 43 studies. The bibliometric aspects of this set of studies are presented below.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

According to the analysis of the publications obtained, totaling 43 articles based on the adopted criteria, it is possible to outline an overview of research on the topic of Entrepreneurial Orientation during the last decade, according to the data mapped and presented in the graphs, tables, and figures below. Initially, Graph 1 presents the evolution of the number of publications over the years between 2010 and 2020..

Graph 1: Classification by year of publication



Source: Research data

Although the breadth of the term Entrepreneurship had already been identified since the beginning of the eighteenth century, research in the field intensified during the last decades, and Entrepreneurial Orientation, in particular, became an object of study even more recently. In the sample under analysis, it can be observed that the three years with the highest numbers of publications are among the last four years analyzed (2017, 2018, and 2020), demonstrating a



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trend of increasing publications. These last four years account for 58.14% of the publications analyzed, although the year 2019 presented lower figures than the two preceding years.

Next, a ranking is presented, according to Table 1, showing the journals with the highest number of publications based on the analyzed sample.

Table 1: Number of publications by journal

Journal	Number of publications	%
Revista de Empreendedorismo e Gestão de Pequenas Empresas	4	9.30
Revista da Micro e Pequena Empresa	3	6.98
Revista de Ciências da Administração	3	6.98
Revista Ibero-Americana de Estratégia	3	6.98
Brazilian Business Review	2	4.65
Revista de Administração FACES Journal	2	4.65
Revista de Tecnologia Aplicada	2	4.65
Revista Eletrônica de Administração	2	4.65
Revista Turismo Visão e Ação	2	4.65
Demais Periódicos	20	46.51
Total	43	100.00

Source: Research data

Here is the English translation without adding or altering anything:

It can be observed that the Revista de Empreendedorismo e Gestão de Pequenas Empresas concentrates the largest number of publications, accounting for 9.30% of the total. This demonstrates that the field of entrepreneurship is a consolidated area of study, with its own specialized journals. However, there is a wide variety of scientific journals that addressed the topic over the last decade, as evidenced by the high percentage represented by Other Journals, which includes journals with only one publication and accounts for 46.51% of the total. Thus, this may corroborate the broad and multidisciplinary nature of Entrepreneurial Orientation. In addition, it is important to highlight the presence of several journals related to Management. This underscores the importance of Entrepreneurial Orientation in studies related to management.

Subsequently, Table 2 presents the number of authors per article.

**Table 2: Number of authors per article**

Number of Authors	Number of publications	%
1 author	0	0.00
2 authors	11	25.58
3 authors	13	30.23
4 authors	14	32.56
5 authors	2	4.65
6 authors	3	6.98
Total	43	100.00

Source: Research data

The first observation from the survey concerns publications produced by single authors, which did not occur in the analyzed sample. Likewise, publications involving five or six authors were also infrequently observed. On the other hand, publications co-authored by two, three, or four authors represent 88.37% of the sample and, therefore, collaborative authorship is widely employed in the production and dissemination of research on the topic. In other words, it can be inferred that there is a community of researchers in the field of entrepreneurship who seek to conduct research on entrepreneurial orientation.

Through a word cloud generated from the keywords of the analyzed articles, it was possible to structure the frequency of the use of these keywords, as shown in Figure 1.



The classification according to the methodological approach of the research is presented in Table 3, shown below.

Table 3: Classification by methodological approach

Approach	Number of publications	%
Quantitative	27	62.79
Qualitative	9	20.93
Literature review	5	11.63
Case study	2	4.65
Total	43	100.00

Source: Research data

The quantitative research method, which uses data collection through the application of questionnaires, shows a significant disparity in relation to the other techniques, being the procedure adopted in 62.79% of the publications analyzed. This indicates that many studies sought to use quantitative research to map the level of entrepreneurial orientation in different organizations. There is also a reasonable number of literature reviews, which indicates that there is a considerable body of production on the topic, since reviews already exist to map and update the scientific literature.

Table 4 presents the classification by sector of activity addressed in the published studies.

Table 4: Classification by sector of activity

Sector of activity	Number of publications	%
Private	28	65.12
Not specified	8	18.60
Third sector	5	11.63
Public	2	4.65
Total	43	100.00

Source: Research data

As expected, studies on entrepreneurial orientation are more frequently conducted with private organizations as their object of study. Since its emergence, entrepreneurship has been associated with private organizations and initiatives. Thus, approximately 65.12% of the scientific research publications on Entrepreneurial Orientation focus on the private sector. This indicates a research gap regarding entrepreneurial orientation in public sector organizations.



Public organizations are increasingly being required to improve their efficiency. Furthermore, the advent of neoliberal discourse has given rise to the concept of public entrepreneurship. In this sense, research on entrepreneurial orientation in public sector organizations may enrich the debate on public entrepreneurship. It is noteworthy that among the seven publications addressing the Third Sector or Public Institutions, six were published during the last three years analyzed, between 2018 and 2020, which may indicate greater attention from researchers to the behavior of leaders and followers in other organizational contexts.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The objective of this study was to conduct a bibliometric review of entrepreneurial orientation through the mapping of scientific research published between January 2010 and December 2020 in journals available in the Spell database. In the theoretical section of this study, an effort was made to clarify the development of the concept of Entrepreneurship, which forms the framework of Entrepreneurial Orientation and its dimensions, by compiling studies and describing attributes shared among the various definitions of the topic. The inherent assimilation of Entrepreneurial Orientation and its influence culminates in the perception that increasing the degree of organizational competitiveness provides better personal and financial performance (MILLER, 1983).

Regarding the data obtained through bibliometric research, an increase in the number of studies on the topic in recent years is initially observed. The multidisciplinary nature of the subject can first be inferred from the number of authors per publication, since there were no single-author publications in the analyzed sample, with authorship being shared among researchers. It can also be inferred from the diversity of journals that published studies on the topic.

With respect to research methodology, the quantitative approach is more prominent than the other modalities, although in the last year analyzed in the



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sample there was the inclusion of the Case Study modality. The sector receiving the greatest research attention is the private sector, even though interest in the Public Sector and the Third Sector grew consistently during the final years of the sample.

Finally, the frequency with which certain words were used in these articles, whether in their titles or as keywords, was analyzed through the word cloud procedure. It was observed that not all dimensions of EO are treated with the same level of importance by researchers, with innovativeness receiving significant emphasis in contrast to the relatively limited attention given to risk-taking in particular. There is also a preference for studies addressing the Entrepreneurial Orientation of managers and employees in micro and small enterprises.

This study presents limitations due to the fact that it does not encompass all available databases, relying solely on the Spell platform, and because it establishes a temporal boundary that may not be sufficient to determine broader trends in the literature. Nevertheless, despite the sample limitations, this study is considered capable of accurately portraying the context of national scientific research on Entrepreneurial Orientation in recent years and contributing to a deeper understanding of the evolution of the theoretical framework surrounding this topic, in accordance with the defined objectives.

As a suggestion for future research, it is recommended to expand the search for published scientific articles by broadening the databases consulted, including through the internationalization of the investigation.

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