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The Effect of Entrepreneurial Orientation on Small Business Performance in Mogadishu

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Abstract

The study examines the influence of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) on the performance of small businesses in Mogadishu, Somalia. It specifically looks into how attributes like competitive aggressiveness, innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking contribute to the success of small business. The researchers utilized a quantitative approach, employing descriptive statistics and correlational analysis. Data was gathered from 200 managers, owners, and employees of small businesses in Mogadishu through an online survey. The survey tool evaluated entrepreneurial mindsets at the firm level as well as performance indicators. The analysis of the data suggests that businesses that embrace an entrepreneurial mindset tend to achieve better outcomes. Findings show that innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking are significantly positively correlated with performance, while competitive aggressiveness does not have a meaningful effect. The study underscores the necessity for regulatory frameworks and support programs that aid small businesses in Mogadishu in implementing entrepreneurial practices, leading to improved performance, economic advancement, and competitive advantages.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Small Business Performance, Competitive Aggressiveness, Innovativeness**,** Proactiveness**,** Risk-taking.

1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) has emerged as a vital determinant in global corporate success, fueling innovation, development, and competitiveness across a wide range of industries. EO is defined as a collection of organizational qualities that support proactive, inventive, and risk-taking behaviors (Miller, 1983). It includes essential elements such as innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). A strong entrepreneurial attitude allows companies to find and capitalize on new possibilities, adapt to changing market conditions, and acquire a competitive advantage (E. Baker & M. Sinkula, 2009).

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The performance of small businesses is influenced by entrepreneurial orientation (EO). However, none of the studies deconstructed its specific dimensions like innovativeness, proactivity, competitive aggressiveness, or risk taking (Acs, 1992). Literature indicates that the relationship between EO and performance is generally positive but small businesses tend to face implementation challenges due to their constrained resources and market structure (Herlinawati et al., 2019). This study seeks to examine how EO influences performance in small businesses in order to create frameworks for entrepreneurs to strategically position themselves in the market. EO's influence on performance within the context of developing countries like Somalia is markedly underexplored (Wiklund & Shepherd 2005). Political volatility, weak infrastructure, and scarce market opportunities pose problems for small businesses to thrive (Magaji, 2017).
This study focuses at the relation between EO and the performance of small businesses in Mogadishu, Somalia. It emphasizes on the impact of four major dimensions: innovativeness and competitive aggression, proactiveness, and risk-taking. Studying how these EO characteristics effect small company performance in this special and complicated setting seeks to give significant insights for businessmen, policymakers, and stakeholders in building a more dynamic and competitive corporate environment in Mogadishu. This study aims to achieve specific objectives based on previous research results.

1.1 Objectives of research

- To explore the relationship between competitive aggressiveness and small business performance in Mogadishu.
- To explore the relationship between innovativeness and small business performance in Mogadishu.
- To investigate the impact of proactiveness on small business performance in Mogadishu.
- To investigate the impact of risk taking on small business performance in Mogadishu.

1.2 Questions of research

- What is the effect of competitive aggressiveness on small business performance.
- How does innovativeness contribute to small business performance.
- What is the relationship between proactiveness and small business performance.
- How does risk taking effect on small business performance.
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2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

The Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) theory, developed by Michael H. Morris, Duane L. Ireland, and Jeffrey G. Covin, is used to investigate the impact of tactical orientations and practices on a firm's performance. EO comprises five key components: autonomy, proactiveness, risk-taking, inventiveness, and competitive aggression. Small enterprises with higher levels of EO are more likely to outperform rivals by spotting market opportunities, adapting to changing market conditions, and overcoming obstacles (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996).

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This study aims to examine how these EO aspects affect market share, growth, and revenue of small enterprises in Mogadishu, Somalia. The study aims to provide valuable insights for businessmen, legislators, and stakeholders by investigating the connection between EO aspects and business results. The findings will guide the design of efficient laws and support networks that encourage an entrepreneurial spirit, improve Mogadishu's small enterprises, boost the city's economy, and create jobs.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Orientation

A key idea in both strategic management and entrepreneurship studies is entrepreneurial orientation, or EO. Although several phrases, including business management, business ownership, and intrapreneurship, are sometimes used synonymously, they all refer to a company's proactive, creative, and daring approach to commercial prospects (Machirori & Fatoki, 2013). Miller (1983), groundbreaking work established the groundwork for EO research by defining it as a firm-level construct that includes a proactive, creative, and daring approach to commercial prospects. This idea was further developed by other studies, most notably by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). who identified five essential aspects that together define EO: Competitive aggressiveness, Proactiveness, Risk-taking, Autonomy, Innovativeness.

2.2.1 Competitive Aggressiveness.

One of the main components of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) is competitive aggressiveness, which shows how proactive and assertive a company is with its competitors. It includes a variety of acts used to get a competitive edge, such as vigorous market penetration initiatives, forceful advertising campaigns, and prompt reactions to rival moves (Aktan & Bulut, 2008). Competitive aggressiveness is fundamentally about being proactive and assertive in order to overcome rivals (Abdullahi et al., 2019). This may take a variety of shapes, including as direct attacks like price wars and heightened marketing efforts, as well as indirect attacks like identifying the vulnerabilities of competitors and creating novel goods. Additionally, businesses may use predatory pricing, even if this has moral and legal ramifications. Though innovation and distinction are essential for developing a lasting competitive advantage, collaborative and strategic relationships may also be used to obtain a competitive edge (Panjaitan et al., 2021). Several strategic and tactical methods used by businesses to obtain a competitive advantage are highlighted in the literature on competitive aggression. Such as Kotler and Singh's "marketing warfare tactics" that emphasize aggressive marketing efforts, Rothschild's "surprise use" that leverages unforeseen steps, Lieberman and Montgomery's "first mover" tactics which emphasize promptly market entry and building a dominant sale in the market, Porter's "offensive strategies" that aim at tackling competitors, and MacMillan's "preemptive strategies" that concentrate on expecting and mitigating competitor actions (Herlinawati et al., 2019).

H1: There is a positive relationship between competitive aggressiveness and small business performance in Mogadishu.

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2.2.2 Innovativeness

In the fast-paced, cutthroat corporate world of currently, innovation is a vital component of achieving business objectives. Using actual data connecting innovativeness to enhanced efficiency, academics highlight its importance in creating economic benefits (Nybakk, 2012). Even while a learning orientation is frequently linked to encouraging creativity, study on its exact facilitating function is still underway (Idowu, 2013). The development, acceptance, and use of innovative concepts, procedures, goods, and services are all included in the notion of innovation. It entails taking the initiative to find and seize new possibilities, create innovative technology, and enhance current goods and activities (Lwamba, and Sakwa, 2013). Innovativeness is "the ability and desire to accept, imitate, or implement cutting-edge methods, processes, and thoughts and commercialize these with the goal to offer new goods," according to Kyrgidou and Spyropoulou (2013). This term highlights the significance of successfully executing and selling innovative ideas in addition to coming up with ideas (Domi et al., 2019). Innovativeness, according to Kübra Hizarci and İpek (2023) is "a gauge of a business's readiness to take on novel ideas, items, procedures, and improvements." This concept emphasizes how crucial corporate culture and mentality are to creating an innovative environment.

H2: There is a positive relationship between innovativeness and small business performance in Mogadishu.

2.2.3 Proactiveness

Proactiveness, which is defined as foreseeing and seizing new chances, is linked to entrepreneurship and influencing the environment by creating new goods, technologies, and administrative procedures as opposed to responding to them (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Proactiveness is an opportunity-seeking mindset that entails taking action before the competition to predict future consumer demands. By developing and implementing strategic methods first in existing markets or breaking into new ones, proactive enterprises actively anticipate changes in the market and affect their external environment (Hong & Sullivan, 2013). Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) employ proactive strategies to put themselves in a good position by seeing shifting market dynamics that rivals haven't yet taken advantage of (Pokhrel, 2024). Proactive businesses have an edge over those that respond to environmental shifts and rivals' strategic moves. At higher levels, the potential advantages of being proactive are enhanced since SMEs frequently lag behind their rivals when they cannot predict future developments in the market (Levinthal, 1993).

H3: There is a positive relationship between proactiveness and small business performance in Mogadishu.

2.2.4 Risk-taking

Risk-taking involves engaging in activities with uncertain outcomes, such as venturing into unfamiliar territories, incurring substantial debt, or investing large sums in areas with unpredictable results. This behavior is commonly associated with entrepreneurship (Wiklund &

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Shepherd, 2005). According to Miller (1983), risk-taking refers to the extent to which leaders are ready to deploy significant and risky resources, which have a considerable possibility of leading to failures. Entrepreneurial firms are often defined by their tendencies to take risks, like allocating considerable resources or incurring large debts to seize market opportunities and achieve substantial profits (Putniņš & Sauka, 2020). Risk-taking is a well-recognized and frequently used criterion for assessing entrepreneurial orientation, which can be evaluated at the organizational level through executives' insights regarding the company's willingness to engage in high-risk initiatives and their preferences for cautious versus bold strategies to fulfill organizational objectives (Levinthal, 1993). Past studies have highlighted additional factors that may affect risk-taking, which include the results of previous risk-related activities, the way risky situations are presented, and the company's capacity to function effectively in uncertain conditions (Abdullahi et al., 2019).

H4: There is a positive relationship between risk-taking and small business performance in Mogadishu.

2.3 Small Business Performance

creativity, employment creation, and economic growth are all greatly aided by small firms. By diversifying the market, technical breakthroughs, and the promotion of international competitiveness, companies provide a substantial contribution to the industrial sector (Acs, 1992). Both locally and internationally, small enterprises are acknowledged as essential drivers to financial well-being (Morrison, et al., 2003). Yet there are several obstacles to overcome in order to comprehend and quantify small business performance. A wide variety of performance measures have been used by scholars, including either measurable (like income and revenue increase) and emotional (like shareholder happiness) metrics. Different inferences about the association among particular elements and small company achievement have been drawn as an outcome of this variability in performance indicators (Alhnity, et al., 2016) Key performance indicators (KPIs) must be meticulously chosen based on the unique objectives and aims of each person company. These measurements can involve financial performance indicators like revenue, earnings development, and cash flow; customer performance statistics like client happiness and loyalty; operational achievement like profitability and productivity; innovation efficiency statistics like the quantity of novel goods introduced and R&D spending; and interpersonal and social performance measurements like societal effects and sustainability. Actually, measuring small business performance is essential to comprehending its successful variables as well as discovering areas for enhancement (Mashenene & Kumburu, 2023).

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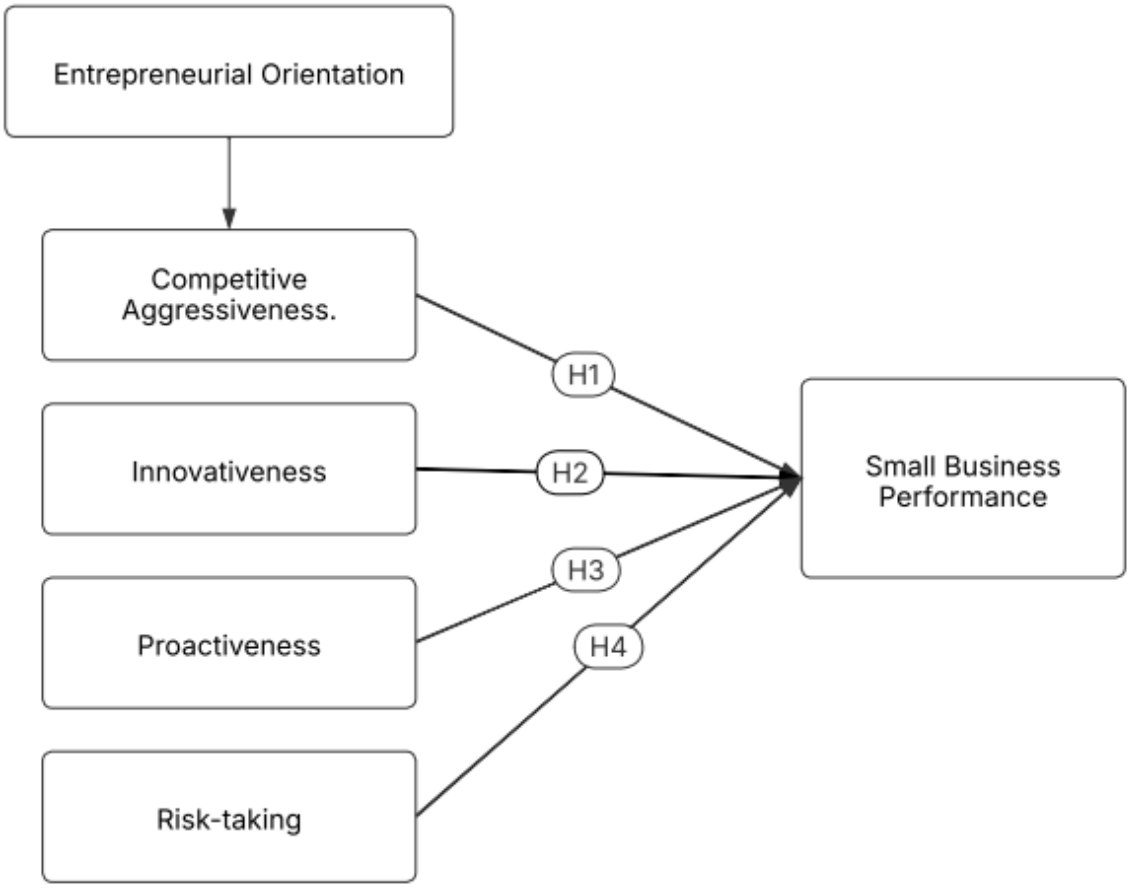

Figure 1 Conceptual Frame Work

3. Method

The study used a quantitative approach, employing descriptive and correlational methods to investigate the connection between small business performance and entrepreneurial orientation. Metrics like mean, standard deviation and frequencies were among the descriptive statistics used to describe the sample's characteristics and provide a thorough summary of the data. The nature and intensity of the association were evaluated using correlational analysis.

The sample population consisted of managers, business owners, and employees in various management roles in Mogadishu. To ensure representation across different sectors of the business community, a stratified random sampling approach was employed. Data were collected from 200 respondents via an online questionnaire delivered during February 10,2025, and February 21,2025. The performance of small businesses, which was the dependent variable, was assessed using indicators such as growth and profitability (Acs, 1992). The independent variable, which was entrepreneurial orientation, was gauged through dimensions like competitive aggressiveness, innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking. The questionnaire comprised twenty-one items, with five items dedicated to both innovativeness and competitive

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aggressiveness according to previous research (Nybakk, 2012), along with three items each for proactiveness and risk-taking, plus five items addressing small business performance sourced from established tools (Osorio et al., 2021). Data analysis was performed using Smart Partial Least Squares 4 (Smart PLS 4), indicating that the study's components demonstrated high levels of internal consistency, reliability, and discriminant validity.

4. Result

4.1. Demographic information

Researchers implemented a data screening procedure utilizing a Google form to reduce the occurrence of incomplete data. The study explored demographic variables and revealed that among 200 participants, 112 identified as male, highlighting a bias toward men influenced by cultural norms affecting the labor demographics in the country. The findings indicated that 76 participants were within the 41–50 age group, while 69 participants fell into the 18–31 age group, and 55 participants were in the 31–40 age range. The research divided participants into three educational categories, with the majority holding a school certificate (approximately 122), followed by only 10 individuals with master's degrees and 68 with bachelor's degrees. The study also classified occupations into three categories: 95 participants were business owners, 78 were employees, and 27 were managers.

4.2 Measurement Model

The assessment of the measurement model is conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the constructs. Various indicators were analyzed to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model. These indicators comprised factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), discriminant validity, and VIF to identify multicollinearity.
The degree of positive relationship and shared assessment of several indicators that indicate an identical concept are evaluated by convergent validity analysis. The single index of average variance extraction (AVE), factor loading, and composite reliability (CR) are typically required to be taken into account when determining convergence reliability (Hair et al., 2014) In cases where factor loadings surpass the 0.5 criterion, convergent validity and reliability are deemed adequate (Panjaitan et al., 2021).

4.2.1 Constructs Loading, CR, AVE, and VIF for multicollinearity

The reliability scores fall between 0.6 and 0.7, which indicates a level of dependability that is considered acceptable, while scores of 0.8 or higher indicate strong dependability as suggested by (Aktan & Bulut, 2008). All latent items within this research and composite reliability (CR) values were above the recommended threshold of 0.7, as noted by Hair et al. (2014). The composite reliability for the latent constructs in this study ranged from 0.947 to 0.700. The average variance extracted (AVE) reflects the extent of variation in the indicators that can be explained by the latent construct, according to (Panjaitan et al., 2021)**.** The AVE values surpassed the established threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014) and ranged from 0.536 to 0.746 as shown in table 1.

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4.2.2 Convergent and discriminant validities

The subsequent step involves comparing the average variance extracted for each construct with the squared correlations among the components to assess the model's discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of the model was evaluated using both the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the newly established HTMT ratio in partial least squares analysis. The findings are detailed in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. As noted by Kübra Hizarci and İpek (2023), a model demonstrating discriminant validity can have an HTMT value below 0.90, which is deemed acceptable. The results from the model evaluation are shown in Table 4. This supports the discriminant validity of the constructs within our model and reinforces the Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

Table 1 Constructs Loading, CR, AVE, and VIF for multicollinearity

Variables	Indicators	Loadin	CR	AVE	VIF
competitive aggressiveness	CA1 CA2 CA3 CA4 CA5	0.815 0.927 0.760 0.874 0.929	0.936	0.746	2.201 1.474 1.768 3.638 2.019
Innovativeness	INNO1 INNO2 INNO3 INNO4 INNO5	0.919 0.835 0.890 0.912 0.861	0.947	0.718	1.955 2.319 3.343 1.477 2.664
Proactiveness	PRO1 PRO2 PRO3	0.908 0.696 0.688	0.700	0.536	1.048 1.101 1.113
Risk-taking	RISK1 RISK2 RISK3	0.796 0.896 0.826	0.878	0.607	1.005 1.014 1.015
Small business performance	SBP1 SBP2 SBP3 SBP4 SBP5	0.785 0.790 0.799 0.887 0.861	0.914	0.681	2.342 1.877 1.726 2.122 2.985

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Table 3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variables	CA	SBP	INNO	PRO	RISK
CA	0.863				
SBP	0.514	0.826			
INNO	0.624	0.808	0.847		
PRO	0.275	0.387	0.385	0.732	
RISK	0.347	0.331	0.344	0.561	0.779

Table 4: HTMT ratio

Variables	CA	SBP	INNO	PRO	RISK
CA					
SBP	0.116				
INNO	0.303	0.468			
PRO	0.399	0.595	0.573		
RISK	0.747	0.712	0.730	0.795	

4.3 Analysis of structural model

According to the findings in Table 1, the greatest VIF score is 3.63, which is around the 3.3 threshold and indicates that CMB had no discernible effect, as stated by (Hair et al., 2014).
F-square quantifies the effect size, with F^2 values varying from 0.02 to 0.35, reflecting the strength of the association between the independent and dependent variables (Nybakk, 2012). Competitive aggressiveness has a small direct effect (F2 value of 0.01), and innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking significantly affect small business performance with an F2 = 0.376, 0.307, and 0.401. The determination coefficient (R^2) in regression analyses represents the proportion of variability accounted for by the independent variables, with higher values signifying greater explanatory strength (Osorio et al., 2021). The study shows that it has a higher value with $R^2 = 0.963$.

4.4 Structural model estimates (95% Level of confidence)

The research utilizes a two-tailed confidence interval and a significance level of 0.05 to assess the connections between endogenous and exogenous variables. It concentrates on probability values that fall below 0.05 and a T value of 1.96 or greater, which signifies statistical significance (Panjaitan et al., 2021). The results presented in Table 5 indicate that there is no statistically significant relationship at the traditional 0.05 level between competitive aggressiveness and the performance of small businesses, as evidenced by a T-statistic of (0.077) and a P-value of 0.939, which suggests a weak association. Conversely, a strong and statistically significant relationship exists between innovation and small business performance, featuring a T-statistic of 5.726 and a P-value of 0.000, which reflects a substantial positive effect. Similarly, the relationship between proactiveness and small business performance shows a T-statistic of 4.272, with a P-value of 0.000, indicating a highly significant positive influence. Additionally, there is a positive correlation between risk-taking and small business performance, demonstrated

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by a T-statistic of 5.336 and a P-value of 0.000. These results illustrate that innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking contribute to enhanced performance.

Table 5: Structural model estimates and hypothesis testing results

Variables	path coefficients	**T statistics**	**P value**	**Result**
Competitive aggressiveness–small business performance	0.011	0.077	0.939	Rejected
Innovation–small business performance	0.465	5.726	0.000	Accepted
Proactiveness-small business performance	0.176	4.272	0.000	Accepted
Risk-taking-small business performance	0.386	5.336	0.000	Accepted

5. Discussion

The research's presented data indicates that, with a P-value of 0.939, competitive aggressiveness has very little impact on small business performance. According to Riwo et al., (2023), suggests that competitive aggressiveness does not have a significant effect on performance and can actually diminish the motivation to take action Conversely, Ferrier (2001), contended that competitive aggressiveness can improve performance by undermining the strategies of competitors, especially in densely populated markets. The research revealed a robust and statistically significant connection between innovation and the performance of small enterprises. While innovation is seen as a driving force for achievement, its effects can differ. This finding aligns with Damanpour (1991), meta-analysis, which indicated that innovation regularly enhances organizational results, especially in sectors driven by technology. Emphasizing either product or process innovation results in greater growth rates for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

In terms of how proactiveness influences performance, this research revealed a robust and statistically significant connection; being proactive, or seeking out market opportunities before competitors do, is frequently associated with entrepreneurial success. Proactiveness, as reported by Lumpkin & Dess (1996), is a key component of entrepreneurial orientation, allowing companies to exploit rising trends and achieve first-mover advantages. On other hand, Levinthal (1993), concluded in his study that firms that are excessively proactive may face strategic

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myopia, focusing on immediate opportunities rather than long-term stability. These conclusions imply that proactiveness should be harmonized with effective resource management.

The study indicates a positive relationship between risk-taking and performance in small enterprises, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.00, $p < 0.05$. This suggests that by taking entrepreneurial risks, firms can enhance their performance through the exploration of overlooked market segments and adaptation to market changes. The results of this research are consistent with previous studies by Wiklund & Shepherd (2005).

6. Implications to Research and Practice

This research adds to the cumulative body of knowledge concerning Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) by presenting empirical findings derived from the context of a developing country, in this case, Mogadishu, Somalia. The results demonstrate the differential effect of EO dimensions—namely innovation, proactiveness, risk-taking, and competitive aggressiveness—on small business performance. Particularly, innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking exhibit significant positive effects, whereas competitive aggressiveness reveals no statistically significant association with performance. This provides avenues for future research to explore the drivers of limited effectiveness of competitive aggressiveness in certain contexts, in particular emerging economies exposed to peculiar socio-economic conditions. Avenues are opened for further research regarding moderating aspects such as market stability, culture, or resource scarcity that affect the efficiency of competitive aggressiveness.

For professionals, the research highlights encouraging innovation, proactivity, and calculated risk-taking as significant drivers of small business performance. Creative foresight coupled with risk-taking within uncertainties is something that needs focus from scope and market entrepreneurs and business managers in Mogadishu. These insights are useful for policymakers in designing support programs to encourage entrepreneurial activity through targeted training, funding, and infrastructure development. The lack of significance for competitive aggressiveness indicates that businesses in Mogadishu may be better served by more cooperative approaches rather than competitive ones in dealing with difficult market conditions.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) and the small business performance of small businesses in Somalia. The findings indicated that competitive aggressiveness finds negative and innovation, proactiveness, and risk-taking were positive correlation with small business performance, indicating that small businesses that exhibit a more entrepreneurial mindset tend to be more successful in terms of their small business performance. Additionally, the study found that being innovative and assertive in the marketplace enhances small business outcomes. Developing an entrepreneurial mindset, stepping up proactiveness, and encouraging risk taking are all strategies that can help small businesses achieve long-term growth and improve their small business performance.

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The authors of the research suggest that by all this strategies drive, and cultivating an entrepreneurial orientation, small company owners in Mogadishu may improve their small business performance and ensure the long-term viability of their enterprises. It is recommended that entrepreneurs cultivate an entrepreneurial attitude by offering programming training, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities. They should bolster their competitive aggressiveness by gathering comprehensive market knowledge, developing a unique value proposition, and aggressively engaging in marketing and branding initiatives. Small businesses must foster innovation in order to remain competitive and adapt to changing market conditions. Using strategies like investing in, partnering with, and utilizing emerging technology helps efficiently optimize processes and improve user experiences.

7.1 Limitations and future studies

The investigation of entrepreneurial orientation and the performance of small businesses within Somalia and Mogadishu has been hindered thanks to its self-declared questionnaires, sample size consisting of 200 participants, and cross-sectional nature. The results are also questionable because they do not cover the entire region's small businesses. This study used particular aspects of entrepreneurial orientation and a limited scope of small business performance metrics, which in turn resulted in other possible factors being ignored in the unique, politically charged socioeconomic setting. Including moderating factors such as cultural and business norms, market stability, resource availability, and challenges in the Somali environment could help future research with longitudinal approaches and qualitative methodologies. Incorporating participants from different sectors and expanding the sample size would allow broad application of the results.

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