

# CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

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## Abstract

**Background.** Nowadays, corporate entrepreneurship (CE) is perceived as an essential approach to boost the innovation and creativity within existing organizations for achieving higher opportunities in the market. This paper examines this concept, which has been largely discussed in the Anglo-Saxon world over the last thirty years. Like for many other phenomena, also in case of CE, this discussion has provided numerous conceptualizations, and consequently, there is not one unique definition of CE. In this respect, the search for an appropriate basis for understanding and describing the phenomenon of CE engenders a challenging issue for entrepreneurship researchers.

**Research aims.** This paper aims at creating a large platform for understanding the concept of CE by means of a clarification effort through the review of the most important papers in this field and identification of the existing research gaps.

**Methodology.** Systematic literature survey is the applied methodology. EBSCO and Taylor & Francis database were used as a source for the sampling process.

**Key findings.** The analysis does acknowledge the need for more qualitative and rigorous research in this field and brings several recommendations for the future studies. The main conclusions also do urge for a more diversified research in terms of the sectors discussed, as the biggest gap identified is in the services sector. There is also a need for a more structured classification of the measures, depending on the real research focus: CE antecedents or outcomes.

**Keywords:** corporate entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, corporate venturing.

**JEL Codes:** o31, o32.

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## INTRODUCTION

Corporate entrepreneurship (CE) is a concept which has been present, under various names, in the literature for more than thirty years. During this period, in connection with the globalization process, with the evolution of the management science, it underwent a constant evolution of its definition and domain. The very term itself frequently overlaps with others such as intrapreneurship or corporate venturing. Scholars and researchers have not defined CE consistently (Entebang & Harrison, 2012). Trying to understand and study CE in the national or international perspective is a complex issue for the researcher.

Surely, one cannot analyze CE in isolation from entrepreneurship theory, as it is just an extension of this concept to be used in describing entrepreneurial processes taking place within existing organizations. Schumpeter (1934), the father of innovation and entrepreneurship, argued that the entrepreneurial process involves new combinations, and in particular, doing new things or doing things in a new way. New combinations were enabling the entrepreneur to introduce new goods, new production methods, opening new markets, new supply sources, or to fund new organizations. Later, this innovation capacity has been assigned also to organizations and not only to individuals any more. Sharma and Chrisman (1999) treat entrepreneurship as an organizational creation, renewal or innovation that occurs within an existing organization or outside of it. The following discussion clarifies and establishes CE as an activity of the firm.

In Poland, CE is rather poorly researched and studied. Only few scholars decided to analyze and measure CE outcomes and antecedents. Therefore, the author decided to make a review of the theoretical or empirical literature using a research sample based on two the most important databases. The most important aim of this conceptual study is to identify the existing gaps and propose some recommendations for the future research. To achieve this goal, around 70 papers were selected (with the timeline 1996–2016) for further analysis, beginning with the effort of clarification of definitional issues, mentioned by numerous scholars. This allowed us to study the CE domain and to attempt the categorization of the selected articles, through a critical analysis of their outcomes. The conclusions



indicate some directions for future research within a rather wide, going beyond one country, framework.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

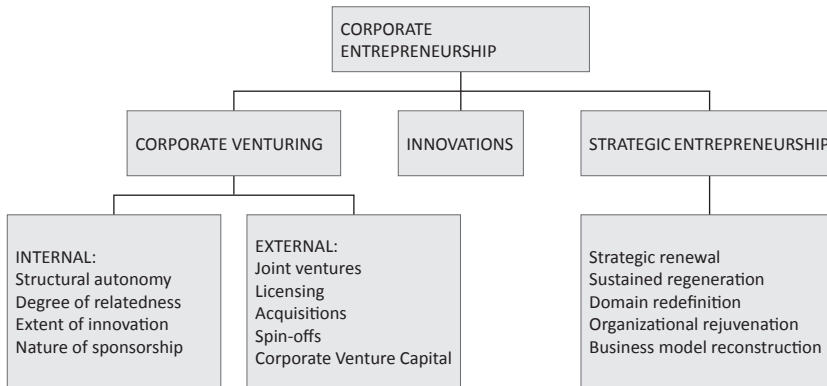
Corporate entrepreneurship (CE) is a notion used to describe entrepreneurship occurring in a mid to large sized organizations (Morris et al., 2008). Entrepreneurship of organizations is a multi-component construct and plays a central role in the enhancement of organizational performance (Dyduch, 2008). According to Kuratko et al. (1990), the need to pursue CE has arisen from different problems faced by the enterprises in the turbulent environment: (1) required changes, innovations, and improvements in the marketplace to avoid stagnation and decline (Miller & Friesen, 1982); (2) perceived weakness in the traditional methods of corporate management, and (3) the turnover of innovative-minded employees who are disenchanted with bureaucratic organizations. Schindehutte et al. (2000) generated a list of events stimulating or triggering an engagement to CE, grouped later on into five categories (Kuratko et al., 2004):

1. Internal/external source,
2. Opportunity-driven/threat-driven,
3. Technology-pushed/market pull,
4. Top down/bottom up,
5. Systematic or deliberate search/chance or opportunism.

CE may be also viewed as consisting of two types of phenomena and processes surrounding them: (1) the birth of new businesses within existing organizations, whether through internal innovation or venturing and (2) the transformation of organizations through strategic renewal, i.e. the creation of new wealth through the combination of resources (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990, p. 5; Dess et al., 1999, p. 85).

Narayanan et al. (2009) state that CE focuses on the various steps and processes associated with creating new businesses and integrating them into the firm's overall business portfolio. CE activities can be internally or externally oriented. The internal activities include product, process and administrative innovations at different levels of the organization (Zahra, 1991). Internal (or intra-corporate) entrepreneurship refers to all formalized entrepreneurial activities





**Figure 1.** The corporate entrepreneurship concept content

Source: own understanding based on: Sharma & Chrisman, 1999; Covin & Miles, 1999; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2009.

within existing business organizations. Formalized internal entrepreneurial activities are those which receive explicit organizational sanction and resource commitment for the purpose of innovative corporate endeavors – new product developments, product improvements, new methods or procedures (Schollhammer, 1982, p. 21).

External CE consists of combining resources dispersed in the environment by individual entrepreneurs with their unique resources to create a new resource combination independent of all others (Gautam & Verma, 1997) and includes mergers, joint ventures, venture spin-offs and others.

The CE activities may be also of formal or informal character. Informal activities result from individual creativity or pursuit of self-interest, which after the formal recognition may become an integral part of the business. They aim at creating new business in established companies through product a process innovations and market developments (Zahra, 1991, p. 262). According to Michalski (2005), CE maybe differentiated into two dimensions: the degree of organizational separation from the core business of CE function and the degree of institutionalization of the CE function. The CE function is categorized into four main governance types: development of new products and services, corporate development, single corporate ventures, corporate venture portfolios. The two first are serving for resource exploitation and the two last to resource exploration.



The corporate venturing (CV) is a means of planning organizational ambiguity in entrepreneurial action by separating one group of intrapreneurs from the organizational structure. It may be divided into internal and external CV (Sharma & Chrisman, 1999). The internal CV results in creation of a new business within the existing corporate structure, while the external CV refers to activities that result in the creation of semi-autonomous or autonomous organizational entities that reside outside the existing organizational domain. New businesses created through CV may be heterogeneous in terms of their markets, products and innovativeness, as well as in terms of their parent incubator organizations (Phan et al., 2009).

Wolcott and Lippitz (2007) conceptualize four models of CE, including: the opportunist, the enabler, the advocate and the producer model. The framework is composed of two dimensions: organizational ownership (who within the organization has primary ownership for the creation of new business?) and resource authority (is there a dedicated “pot of money” allocated to CE?). In the opportunist model, CE is based on the efforts in spite of the corporation of project champions, while in the three following models, CE is actively managed.



**Figure 2.** The four models of corporate entrepreneurship

Source: Wolcott & Lippitz, 2007, p. 77.

These two dimensions, under the direct control of management, differentiate how companies approach CE. In order to select the right model, companies need to articulate a strategic vision of



growth, define and communicate company's objectives for CE, and build corporate and divisional leadership. Authors recommend also to start with quick wins which will build credibility and then constantly adapt to the changing situation. The scope of CE becomes wider as organizations not previously recognized as entrepreneurial, need to change their approach in order to survive and succeed in the increasingly competitive environments (Phan et al., 2009). Obviously, the CE activities within corporations are heterogeneous and there is a need to know more about this variety (Narayanan et al., 2009). Authors claim that, depending on the ambitions and organizational capacity, the company has to select one of the proposed models. Each of them requires different forms of leadership, processes and skill sets. Recently, the most popular perspectives searching for better understanding of the CE phenomenon are: competence, knowledge, learning, cognition (Adenfelt & Lagerström, 2006, Hayton & Kelley, 2006; West, 2007) and network (Yiu & Lau, 2008).

Referring to the scope of CE, numerous scholars stress the role of management at different levels of the organization, especially of the top management leadership, shaping the internal organization of CE (Zahra et al., 2000; Dess et al., 2003). According to Ferreira (2005), CE depends on the employees at operational level and their capacity to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Effective leaders can provide the organization with better information about entrepreneurial opportunities and enable the entrepreneurial mindset among the staff members by the regular compensation of their skills and tacit knowledge and the tolerance for failure of ambitious, creative projects.

## RESEARCH METHOD

Since this paper is a review of the theoretical or empirical literature dedicated to corporate entrepreneurship, the research sample was based on two main databases: EBSCO and Taylor & Francis as the most representative for the management research. This research was performed in February 2017. The timespan for the research was 1996 to 2016. However, as the notion of CE has been continuously discussed for over three decades (sometimes under different names),



some important sources preceding the initial time frame had to be analyzed. Several search paths with the following key words were used for the selection: corporate entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, corporate venturing.

At first, 67 papers were selected based on abstracts and in the second phase, after a deeper review of the abstracts, only 58 papers were chosen for the further analysis. Then, it turned out that several papers contained other possibly related references, therefore, 19 additional articles were deemed as relevant for further review. During the snowballing review, 11 articles were chosen as relevant for further analysis. At this stage the sample of 69 papers was established for the main study, beginning with an effort of clarification of definitional issues, mentioned by numerous scholars.

In parallel, the analysis of the main components of the proposed CE constructs has been performed. The following were selected as coding criteria: publication year, type of article, definition of CE, intrapreneurship or corporate venturing, type of studied organization/firm, measures or attributes of CE, research methods and country, the study was performed for. This approach enabled the author to propose an attempt to conceptualize CE and identify the existing research gaps, and, consequently, to make recommendations regarding the next research directions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The concept of corporate entrepreneurship was introduced few decades ago and evolved from the notion of “intrapreneurship”, which was popularized by Macrae (1976, 1982) and Pinchot (1985), who identified intrapreneurs as “in house entrepreneurs, those dreamers who can increase the speed and cost-effectiveness of technology transfer from R&D to the marketplace” (1985, p. 14). Hostager et al. (1998) understand them as individuals and groups working within corporation to (1) identify ideas for new products or services (2) turn these ideas into profitable products or services (1998, p. 11–12). Thornberry (2003, p. 331) describes intrapreneurs as those who bring to bear the mindset and behaviors characteristics of external entrepreneurs and transpose them to an existing and usually large corporate setting. In parallel, there is a strong stream of research



oriented toward another, very important aspect of entrepreneurial behavior of the organizations – a corporate venturing (CV). Von Hippel (1977) defined it as an activity that seeks to generate new businesses for the corporation in which it resides through the establishment of external or internal corporate ventures (p. 163). This activity, involving the creation of the new venture within an existing business unit (Zajac et al., 1991; Hornsby et al., 1993). Both concepts do not exclude one another, they are rather complementary, and in my opinion, provide a more holistic construct of a corporate entrepreneurship. At the same time, in the literature both of them evolve independently and in parallel with other terms describing entrepreneurial orientation of an organization. Additionally, there is an important number of definitions of the main overlapping notions of intrapreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, corporate venturing, strategic entrepreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship. It clearly reveals that the corporate entrepreneurship construct is still evolving, not only through contributions of scholars, but also within the work of business practitioners. In their conceptualizations through the last three decades they were proposing numerous definitions of CE, sometimes hidden under the other, aforementioned terms.

Therefore, the author decided to select some of the definitions to better understand and investigate the evolution of this concept. For the sake of further research and conceptualization effort, the journey through constructs and their definitions was accompanied with an attempt at looking for measures/attributes, research method used and the country of research (see: Table 1). As it may be easily noticed, the same term is sometimes used differently by various authors, and some of them use diverse terms to describe the same phenomenon (Sharma & Chrisman, 1999). Some constructs, in particular corporate venturing, are also studied as an element or one of the three possible components of the CE meta-construct (see: Figure 1). All this confirms that significant complexity and conceptual confusion remains in the field and the need for clarification is still important.



**Table 1.** Intrapreneurship (I), corporate entrepreneurship (CE) and corporate venturing (CV) definitions

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
Intrapreneurship	Pinchot (1985)	Entrepreneurship inside large corporations (p. 15)	10 commandments of intrapreneurship	Large companies	Conceptual research with few case studies for demonstration	US
	Kuratko et al. (1990)	Entrepreneurship inside corporation (p. 50)	Risk taking, slack resources; resource availability, rewards and sanctions, organizational support, time availability, organizational structure	Large companies	Conceptual paper, literature review – the outcome (training) was tested in one Fortune 500 large company	US
	Stevenson & Jarillo (1990)	A process in which individuals inside organizations pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control	Strategy orientation, opportunity, resources, control of resources, management structure, reward philosophy, growth orientation, entrepreneurship culture	Organizations	Conceptual research	–
	Carrier (1996)	An introduction and implementation of significant innovation for the firm by one or more employees working within an established organization (p. 7)	Organizational renewal, business venturing, flexibility and profitability	SME with less than 200 employees (5 cases), service or manufacturing sector	Qualitative research (in-depth interviews)	Canada (Quebec)
	Antoncic & Hisrich (2001)	A process that goes on inside an existing firm, regardless of its size, and leads not only to new business ventures but also to other innovative activities and orientations such as development of new products, services, technologies, administrative techniques, strategies and competitive postures (p. 498)	Innovativeness/innovation proactiveness, organizational support, organizational communication, environmental scanning, self-renewal, new business venturing	Firms with more than 50 employees (192 firms from different sectors)	Quantitative research	US and Slovenia
	Wu et al. (2011)	–	Innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness at individual level (proactive personality, bachelor degree, master degree, age, tenure, male, job autonomy, job variety)	179 employees of one research and consultancy company	Quantitative study	Netherlands

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
Entrepreneurial orientation	Lumpkin & Dess (1996)	Processes, practices, and decision-making activities that lead to a new entry (p. 162)	Innovativeness/innovation, risk taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy	Organizations	Conceptual research	–
	Tajeddini & Mueller (2012)	Processes, practices, and decision-making activities that lead to a new entry (Lumpkin & Dess, p. 357)	Innovativeness/innovation, risk taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy	18 Swiss watch manufacturers	Qualitative (in-depth interviews with owners or senior executives)	Switzerland
Corporate venturing	Zajac et al. (1991)	The creation of an internally-staffed venture unit that is semi-autonomous, with the sponsoring organization maintaining ultimate authority (p. 171)	Innovativeness/innovation prior venture experience, Slack resources; resource availability, autonomy	53 Internal Corporate Joint-Ventures (ICJV), hospital/physician group combinations	Qualitative and quantitative analyses	US
	Hornsby et al. (1993)	Development of new business endeavors within the corporate framework (p. 30)	Risk taking, slack resources; resource availability, rewards and sanctions, organizational support, time availability, organizational structure	Organizations	Conceptual paper, review of literature	–
	Stopford & Baden-Fuller (1994)	The creation of new business within an existing organization (p. 521)	Proactiveness, aspirations beyond current capabilities, team-orientation, capability to resolve dilemmas, learning capabilities	10 firms from 4 European manufacturing firms	Qualitative study (internal reports and interviews)	UK
	Burgers & Jansen (2008)	–	Structural differentiation, cross-functional interfaces, connectedness	240 Dutch companies – respondents executive directors	Quantitative study	Holland
Corporate entrepreneurship	Burgelman (1984)	Internal Corporate Venturing: A process of extending the firm's domain of competence and corresponding opportunity set through internally generated resource combinations (p. 154)	Linking processes, product championing, impetus, strategic forcing, strategic building,	Organizations	Conceptual paper	–
	Jennings & Lumpkin (1989)	The extent to which new products and/or markets are developed (p.489)	Rewards and sanctions, centralization of decision making, specialization		MANOCOVA analysis	US

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
	Covin & Slevin (1991)	Extending the firm's domain of competence and corresponding opportunity set through internally generated new resource combinations (p. 7)	Innovation, risk-taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy	Organizations	Discussion paper with Zahra's critiques	–
	Zahra (1991)	The process of creating new business within established firms to improve organizational profitability and enhance a company's competitive position or the strategic renewal of existing business (pp. 260–261)	Organizational communication, environmental scanning, organizational values/culture	19 of the Fortune 500 industrial firms	Qualitative and quantitative analyses	–
	Jones & Butler (1992)	Entrepreneurial behavior within one firm or the level of entrepreneurial behavior (p. 734)	Risk preferences, opportunism, organizational factors (size, age, complexity, agency problems, innovations)	Organizations	Conceptual paper	–
	Zahra (1993)	The sum of a company's innovation, venturing and renewal efforts (p. 226)	Corporate innovation and venturing: new business creation, new product introduction, percent of revenue from new products, and technological entrepreneurship; The renewal dimension: mission reformulation, reorganization, and system-wide change	102 companies in six 4-digit industrial classification codes (SIC), cluster analysis	Qualitative and quantitative analyses	US
	Knight (1997)	Entrepreneurship at the firm level, reflecting the innovative and proactive disposition of management in a given firm (p. 213)	Orientation toward innovativeness and proactiveness	French and English-speaking managers	ENTERSCALE cross-cultural studies	Canada
	Covin & Miles (1999)	The presence of innovation plus the presence of the objective of rejuvenating or purposefully redefining organizations, markets, or industries in order to create or sustain competitive superiority (p. 50)	Sustained regeneration, organizational rejuvenation, strategic renewal, domain redefinition	Large companies	Conceptual paper	–
	Sharma & Chrisman (1999)	The process whereby an individual, in association with an existing organization, create a new organization or instigate renewal or innovation within that organization (p. 18)	Structural autonomy, degree of relatedness to existing business, extent of innovation, nature of sponsorship	Organizations	Conceptual paper, review of literature	–

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
	Barringer and Blueborn (1999)		Environment scanning intensity, planning flexibility, planning horizon, locus of planning, control system (financial and strategic control)	169 manufacturing companies	Quantitative study	US
	Zahra et al. (2000)	The sum of a company's innovation and venturing activities (p. 947)	New business venturing, ownership	231 medium-size manufacturing companies	Quantitative study	US
	Ubasaran et al. (2001)	A process of organizational renewal associated with two distinct but related dimensions: (1) creating new businesses through markets developments or by undertaking product, process, technological and administrative innovations; (2) redefinition of the business concept, reorganization, and the introduction of system-wide changes for innovation (p. 63)	Different types of entrepreneurs	Organizations	Conceptual paper	–
	Hornsby et al. (2002)	The development and implementation of new ideas into the organization (p. 253)	5 stable antecedents of managers entrepreneurial behavior: management support, work discretion/autonomy, rewards/reinforcements, time availability, organizational boundaries	458 managers in Midwestern public university	Quantitative study (Corporate Entrepreneurship Assessment Instrument: 84 Likert scale questions)	US
	Wolcott & Lipitz (2007)	The process by which teams within an established company conceive, foster, launch and manage a new business that is distinct from the parent company but leverages the parent's assets, market position, capabilities or other resources (p. 75)	Organizational ownership, resource authority	40 global companies	Case study	global
	Lassen (2007)	Ongoing strategic consideration of entrepreneurial opportunities – STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP (p. 110)	Entrepreneurial mindset, entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial leadership, managing resources strategically, competitive advantage, wealth creation	7 large companies within high-tech industries, various sizes	Multi-case design: case studies of very differentiated companies (strategic documentation, in-depth Interviews with top or middle managers and R&D professionals)	–

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
	Dyduch (2008)		Proactiveness, innovativeness, intrapreneurship, risk taking, pressure on effectiveness, flexibility in acting and thinking (improvisation), growth orientation, management structure, time availability and organizing, entrepreneurial orientation and culture, reward philosophy, opportunity orientation	308 organizations representing different sectors	Quantitative research	Poland
	Kuratko et al. (2009)	Involving the identification and exploitation of opportunities, while simultaneously creating and sustaining a competitive advantage	Strategic entrepreneurship	The Associated Group (insurance services)	Case study	US
	Kelley et al. (2009)	–	Organizational network capacity (ONC), individual network capacity (INC) and program network capacity (PNC)	12 multinationals	Longitudinal (4 years) multiple case method (143 study interviews with 12 employees of multinationals)	–
	Li et al. (2009)	–	Environmental scanning intensity, planning flexibility, locus of planning and control system	533 hotels and/or restaurant business	Quantitative study	US
	Zimmerman (1990)	–	Entrepreneurship Intensity Questionnaire, Corporate Entrepreneurship Climate Instrument	Two companies: Intel and GE	Case study	US
	Entebang & Harrison (2012)	The pursuit of strategic organizational innovation, strategic renewal and corporate venturing initiatives or achieved through entrepreneurial orientation by established organizations facilitated by efficient and effective management of both internal and external corporate entrepreneurship factors for the purpose of improving organizational overall performance (p. 7)	Innovation, new business creation/corporate venturing, strategic renewal	Organizations	Conceptual paper	–

Concept	Source	Definition	Measure/Attribute	Organization	Research Method	Country
	Duobiene (2013)	A creation process of new value at organizational level, based on a unique combination of resources and opportunities to be used (Schumpeter, 1934; 1942, p. 585)	Managerial practices, entrepreneurial culture, managers attitudes toward entrepreneurship	77 organizations in different lifecycles	Quantitative study	Lithuania
	Yildiz (2014)	–	Innovativeness, new business venturing, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity	54 employees of a leading multinational company in automotive sector	Quantitative study	Turkey
	Burgers and Covin (2016)	–	Shared vision, organizational size, structural differentiation, senior team social integration, cross functional interfaces, environmental dynamism	240 firms of all sizes	Quantitative study	Netherlands
	Kakapour et al. (2016)	–	Opportunity recognition, market orientation (MO), learning orientation (LO), covariates (firm age, self-efficacy, adversity quotient response, social capital and social skill)	130 Iranian SMEs – knowledge-based firms	Quantitative study	Iran
	Rusak (2016)	–	Innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness	6 managers in art industry	Qualitative study (interviews)	Western Australia

Source: own elaboration.

As presented above (see: Table 1), most of the scholars have tried to identify the factors that encourage the CE within an existing organization for more than three decades. Some authors did not propose their own definition of CE, simply applying already existing in the literature delimitation, notwithstanding, these studies offered an interesting input in terms of the other analyzed elements (measures, organization size, research methods, or country). The outcome of this comparison clearly shows the confusion in the use of the presented constructs and deployment of very similar measures for describing all of them. Some of the presented studies allowed their authors for proposing a relatively sophisticated tools for measuring the corporate entrepreneurship activity, mostly based on questionnaires addressed to the organization's managers (see: Table 2). This, according to the author, partially explains the recurring use of methods by different generations of scholars. These tools have been validated in widely diversified organizations both in terms of sector and size.

**Table 2.** Main tools for measuring CE

Tool	Topic	Elements of the tool
ENTRESCALE (Miller & Friesen, 1992; Covin & Slevin, 1999; Knight, 1997)	Assessment of the firm's entrepreneurship	Environmental hostility, organization structure, strategic posture and financial performance
Innovation-venturing-renewal scale (Zahra, 1996)	Entrepreneurial activities of the organization	Innovation, venturing renewal
Entrepreneurial Orientation Scale (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996)	The ways in which enterprise combine and transform tangible resources	Innovativeness/innovation, risk taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy
Entrepreneurial Performance Index (EPI) (Morris & Sexton, 1996)	Level of intensity of entrepreneurship in organizations	Innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness
Corporate Entrepreneurship Assessment Instrument (CEAI) (Hornsby et al., 1993; Morris & Kuratko, 2002)	Organizational factors to help managers (leaders) focus their effort to encourage CE	Management support, work discretion, rewards and reinforcement, time availability, organizational boundaries
Entrepreneurial Management (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990; Brown et al., 2001)	Entrepreneurship as the question of strategic management	Strategy orientation, opportunity, resources, control of resources, management structure, reward philosophy, growth orientation, entrepreneurship culture

Source: own description based on Scheepers et al., 2007; Sakhdari, 2016.



The existence of these tools certainly enhances the quantitative approach to study CE as the majority of them, besides scientific aims, have direct practical applications. The CEAI, for instance, measures entrepreneurial behaviors at the individual level – this analysis may help the organization to identify the factors which may help her to reach higher and higher levels of entrepreneurial attitude. Unfortunately, as with most scales developed in North America, some of the tools still lack strong evidence of cross-cultural validity, reliability and freedom from cultural bias. Indeed, some but still not numerous attempts have been made to thoroughly assess the scales' psychometric properties in cross-cultural studies. This effort needs to be continued (Sakhdari, 2016).

Although empirical evidence related to CE has been around for more than three decades, it remains fairly ambiguous. Hence, different scholars have used diversified perspectives to approach CE and all categorization effort seems very challenging.

Entrepreneurship researchers appear to perceive CE as an entrepreneurial activity, a process, a strategy and a behavior executed by a group of employees in existing organizations for the purpose of creating structural growth and improving competitive position through innovation, strategic renewal, and corporate venturing activities (Entebang & Harrison, 2012), or analyzed at different levels, such as organizational, venture or individual levels (Belousova et al., 2010). At the organizational level, numerous papers talk about the model of corporate entrepreneurial strategy (CES) (Ireland et al., 2009; Kreiser et al., 2011; Kearney & Meynhardt, 2016), entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (Covin et al., 2005; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996), entrepreneurial management (Brown et al., 2001; Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990), firm behavior (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003), the organizational learning perspective (Dess et al., 2003; Sambrook & Robert, 2005); wealth creation (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004); a competency-based perspective (Hayton & Kelley, 2006); the human resource approach (Maes et al., 2005). At the venture or project level, researchers investigate the evolution of the idea into a final product (Burgelman, 1984; Vesper, 1984). At individual level, scholars focus on entrepreneurial individuals within organization (Pinchot, 1985; Jones & Butler, 1992).

The other classification may be organized according to the purpose of analysis of CE phenomenon. In this approach, one can distinguish studies aiming at conceptualizing this phenomenon and





making a review of the existing research evidence, a large group of articles analyzing the antecedents of CE and a few less numerous articles on its outcomes. The selected papers, grouped in the thematic associations mentioned above may be divided into some conceptual subgroups (see: Table 3). Regarding the antecedents, three main concepts emerge from the analysis: environment, firm and management team, somehow dissociated from the enterprise itself. Regarding the effects of CE, the main research focus is on the growth, competitiveness, performance and innovation. Although, such a categorization may be questionable as it is difficult to separate performance from competitiveness, innovation and growth, it constitutes the first attempt of the author, based on the performed analysis.

**Table 3.** Looking for the CE research categorization

Conceptualization and reviews	Antecedents of CE	CE outcomes
domain of CE (Zahra, 1996, Sharma & Chrisman, 1999; Covin & Miles, 1999; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2009)	environment (Simsek & Heavey (2011) Romero-Martínez et al., 2010; Zahra, 1991, 1993)	growth (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001)
implementation of CE (Wolcott & Lippitz, 2007)	firm (Behrens & Patzelt, 2016; Kellermanns & Eddleston, 2006; Nason et al., 2015; Simsek et al., 2009; Yiu & Lau, 2008)	competitiveness (Hitt et al., 2001; Paunović, 2012)
literature review (Phan et al., 2009; Höglund, 2009; Corbett et al., 2013; Sakhdari, 2016)	management team (Zahra et al., 2000; Dess et al., 2003; Hayton & Kelley, 2006; Heavey & Simsek, 2013; Ling et al., 2008; Naldi et al., 2015; Behrens & Patzelt, 2016)	performance (Zahra, 1996; Rauch et al., 2009; Dydych, 2008; Oblój et al., 2010; Engelen et al., 2012; Bratnicka & Bratnicki, 2013, Žur, 2013)
measures (Maes, 2003; Wójcik-Karpacz, 2016)		innovation (Barringer & Bluedorn, 1999; McFadzean et al., 2005; Heidemann Lassen, Gertsen & Riis, 2006)
entrepreneurial management (Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990)		

Source: own elaboration.

This approach to the structuring the most important literature enabled us to arrive at some conclusions and, at the same time, recommendations for the further research.

## CONCLUSIONS

Researchers in corporate entrepreneurship use very wide scope of perspectives for its analysis. The most important seems the corporate venturing (CV) perspective, conceived on the one hand, as an integral part of CE, and on the other hand, as a much broader construct of CE understood as internal corporate venturing (Burgelman, 1984). The greatest number of conceptual studies has been conducted in the Anglo-Saxon countries, which has changed only in the recent years due to Chinese and West-European researchers. Consequently, the main theoretical and empirical evidence come from rather similar economic environment and business culture. The evidence from young market economies is missing.

**Table 4.** Summary of the main conclusions et recommendations

Research outcome	Criticalities	Recommendation
The empirical evidence dominated by US, few Chinese and European papers (mainly from WE)	Business culture Economic context	Need for more country specific studies
Predominance of quantitative methods	Sample Quality of respondents	Need for more qualitative approach
Predominance of evidence from manufacturing sector	Innovation pressure R&D	Need for sector specific evidence
Little relevance with the size of firms	Generalization of outcomes	Need for size specific evidence
Multiplicity of measures of CE	Irrelevance of application	Need for classification of measuring tools

Source: own elaboration.

The predominance of quantitative research methods is visible. Qualitative research methods, e.g., case studies, are much less popular, especially in the first twenty years of CE research. Therefore, there is a need for more qualitative or mixed research methods.

Additionally, the manufacturing sector has been predominating. Considering that this sector is the most exposed to the pressure of innovation, quite commonly equipped with B&R units, so also the most committed to the implementation of new organizational approaches aiming at enhancing the innovativeness, there is certainly a necessity of more diversified sectoral research. The service sector, the most developing among others worldwide in recent years has not yet received special attention from researchers.



Another conclusion is related to the size of the organizations that have been studied. Contrary to the expectations of the author, the research was carried out not exclusively in corporations, constituting the background for evolution of the discussed construct, but also in small or micro enterprises. To allow any comparisons, there is a need for more organized size specific evidence.

There is also a multitude of tools for measuring CE, on the one hand applied to estimation of the antecedents and on the other of the CE outcomes. Researchers use the meta-analysis tools, organized around innovation-venturing-renewal. Therefore, the need for a more structured classification of CE measures and of their application, is evident.

Despite suggesting several recommendations, this paper comes with certain limitations. It provides quite a general overview of the corporate entrepreneurship phenomenon. No discussion regarding more specific aspects or nationally explored characteristics of CE has started yet. Thus, this article is only a starting point for more advanced research in an international or national perspective.

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## PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚĆ KORPORACYJNA. PRZEGLĄD LITERATURY I PERSPEKTYWY PRZYSZŁYCH BADAŃ

### Abstrakt

**Tło.** Przedsiębiorczość korporacyjna postrzegana jest jako podejście niezbędne do pobudzania innowacyjności i kreatywności w organizacjach w celu zwiększenia szans rynkowych. Niniejszy artykuł analizuje tę koncepcję, ciesząc się dość dużym zainteresowaniem w ciągu ostatnich trzydziestu lat w krajach anglosaskich. Podobnie jak w przypadku wielu innych zjawisk, także w odniesieniu do przedsiębiorczości korporacyjnej, dyskusja ta dostarczyła licznych konceptualizacji i z tego względu nie ma jednej uniwersalnej definicji tej koncepcji. W tym kontekście, poszukiwanie odpowiedniej podstawy do zrozumienia i opisanie zjawiska przedsiębiorczości korporacyjnej stawia środowisku badaczy przedsiębiorczości sporo wyzwań.

**Cele badawcze.** Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu stworzenie takiej podstawy poprzez doprecyzowanie pojęcia przedsiębiorczości korporacyjnej, dzięki zrealizowanemu przeglądowi literatury oraz poprzez identyfikację istniejących luk badawczych.

**Metodologia.** Stosowaną metodologią jest systematyczny przegląd literatury. Bazy danych EBSCO oraz Taylor & Francis posłużyły jako źródło zgromadzonej w ramach badań literatury.

**Kluczowe wnioski.** Analiza potwierdza potrzebę bardziej jakościowych i rygorystycznych analiz w tej dziedzinie oraz zawiera szereg zaleceń dla przyszłych badań. Główne konkluzje zachęcają do różnicowania badań pod kątem sektorów, a największa zidentyfikowana luka występuje w sektorze usług. Istnieje również potrzeba bardziej ustrukturyzowanej klasyfikacji miar zjawiska przedsiębiorczości korporacyjnej w zależności od faktycznego celu badań: jego poprzedników lub efektów.

**Słowa kluczowe:** przedsiębiorczość korporacyjna, intraprzsiębiorczość, przedsiębiorstwo korporacyjne.

