



Uluslararası Akademik Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi

Uluslararası Akademik Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi (<http://dergipark.gov.tr/yonbil>)
2020, Cilt 6, Sayı 9

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF ECOPRENEURS¹

EKOGİRİŞİMCİLERİ MOTİVE EDEN FAKTÖRLER

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Abstract

Although it is quite new phenomenon in business life, ecopreneurship is a growing profession among the entrepreneurs in almost every industry. More and more people are choosing to become ecopreneurs when they start their own business. This study tries to shed light to the underlying reasons why people want to become ecopreneurs and what drives them to walk down such a path. The study also compares the motivating factors between the classical entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs and highlights the differences and similarities. The method of the study is a critical review of the literature and it is intended to be a starting point for further empirical analysis.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Ecopreneurship, Motivation

Özet

Ekogirişimcilik iş yaşamında göreceli olarak yeni bir kavram olsa da, hemen hemen her sektördeki girişimciler tarafından daha fazla tercih edilmeye başlanan bir meslek olarak görülmektedir. Kendi işlerini kurmak isteyen kişilerden her geçen gün daha fazlası ekogirişimciliği seçmeye yönelmektedir. Bu çalışma ile insanların neden ekogirişimci olmak istediklerinin altında yatan sebeplere ışık tutmak ve onları bu yola çıkmaya nelerin güdülediğini tespit etmek istenmiştir. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda klasik girişimciler ile ekogirişimcileri motive eden faktörleri de karşılaştırmış, aralarındaki farkları ve benzerlikleri vurgulamaya çalışmıştır. Bu çalışmada yöntem olarak eleştirel yazın taraması kullanılmış ve daha sonra yapılabilecek ampirik çalışmaların başlangıç noktası olması amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Girişimcilik, Ekogirişimcilik, Motivasyon

¹ Bu çalışma İşletme ve Yönetim Bilimleri Uluslararası Kongresi (28-29 Şubat 2020) bildiri kitapçığında yayınlanmıştır.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore what motivates ecopreneurs to start businesses. Consequently, the research question is: What motivates ecopreneurs to start businesses? This study will examine ecopreneurship definitions in literature, the emergence of the ecopreneurship literature, theoretical framework, motivation factors for entrepreneurship, motivation factors for ecopreneurship, and comparison of motivations between entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs.

1. DEFINITIONS OF ECOPRENEURSHIP

Many definitions of the term ecopreneur, as well as ecopreneurship, are found in the literature. For instance, Isaak (2005) explained that an ecopreneur is an individual whose intention is transformation of a sector the economy towards a sustainable future by establishing a business enterprise or company in a particular sector with emphasis of green processes and green design and with the long-term goal of ensuring that everything that is done in his business venture is sustainable.

Based on Isaak's (2005) definition, Kirkwood and Walton (2010) defined ecopreneurs as entrepreneurs whose business philosophy is grounded in sustainability. Another description of an ecopreneur has been provided by Gibbs (2009), who described ecopreneurs as businesspeople who do not participate in eco-friendly markets or businesses with the sole purpose of making profits but whose primary reason for engaging in the eco-friendly markets is to promote environmental values and "green social values." Based on this definition, Chopra (2014) defined ecopreneurs as businesspeople who operate businesses that are focused on attaining social and environmental requirements set by the countries or states they operate in.

Ecopreneurship is a term that constitutes two words these words are ecological and entrepreneurship. Therefore, entrepreneurship can be said as entrepreneurship by way of the environmental lens. Ecopreneurship is featured by some critical aspect of entrepreneurship activities that are accustomed less towards technical procedures or management systems and concentrated more on the individual initiatives and skills of the entrepreneurial individual or team to achieve market thrive with environmental innovation. Recently, some authors had begun dealing with environmental entrepreneurship since 1990 when the first wave of literature was initiated (Keogh & Polonsky, 1998).

Entrepreneurial thinking began first with the individual, while environmental preference is personal concerns. Ecopreneurs portray an individual knowledge and treat person life as a creative act. The disparity between personal goals and perceived reality are considered as a challenge and not actually a problem. Ecopreneurs influenced their company significantly because of their own objectives and preferably such that these are articulated in the company goals. These are more often associated with small companies and start-up companies to a great extent as compared to big enterprises (Schaltegger, 2002).

Despite the fact that environmental managers can exit the company without the firm losing substantial reputation, ecopreneurs comprise and shape the image of their company. Due to the powerful influence of the company leader or leaders on company aims, ecopreneurship and the status of an ecopreneur can also be vital to the entire company. Ecopreneurs can narrowly further be defined as starting up of a very innovative enterprise with the aim of supplying environmental goods and services. (Schaltegger, 2002).

Moreover, ecopreneurs can be viewed in established firms, as the process of developing a significant market success with environmental goods and services being part of these strong firms. With the aim of further defining, ecopreneurship can be demonstrated as an innovative market-oriented and personality-driven type of value creation by environmentally innovations and goods that exceed the start-up stage of a company. These enormous definitions of ecopreneurship display intrapreneurs as a major subgroup of ecopreneurs. This is because intrapreneurs depict actors within an organization who greatly modify and shape the environmental together with the business growth and development of an existing company. Ecopreneurs is hence differentiated from various forms of corporate environmental growth by the company's firm determination to environmental advancement and its strong appetite for business growth.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF ECOPRENEURSHIP IN LITERATURE

Rivera-Camino (2007) has also described ecopreneurs as businesspeople who operate by either establishing a green business, supplying green services and products or initiating green methods of production, encouraging people to buy green services and products or by creating green jobs. Case studies conducted by Kainrath (2009) also led to the identification of three key attributes of ecopreneurs that are linked to their business acumen in any society. These attributes can be used to describe or define ecopreneurs. One of these attributes is what is known as eco-innovation; which describes an ecopreneurs capacity to provide innovative solutions as a means of solving environmental problems. The second attribute of ecopreneurs is eco-commitment; that ability to create and implement policies need to help create focus societal focus on green activities. The third characteristic of ecopreneurs is eco-opportunity; which refers to the identification of opportunities for innovation that will aid in solving environmental issues and helps in accomplishing sustainable business operations.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF ECOPRENEURSHIP

3.1. Schumpeter's Theory. The Schumpeterian theory of entrepreneurship is the theoretical foundation for ecopreneurship. Schumpeter (1942) described entrepreneurs as individuals who drive innovation. Consequently, when the society needs change, the role of the entrepreneur is to supply the innovation that provides the society with novel avenues of solving its problems. Schumpeter (1942) further explained that problems present in our environments lead to innovation as most of them are linked to old and inefficient technology.

Lennox and York (2011) have further noted that because the current solutions to the environmental problems we currently face are not adequate for sustainable future, there is a need a new form of entrepreneurship that will create something new. In this case, something new can be a new organizational form, the service distribution system, technological development, or production method.

3.2. Ecological Modernization Theory. This theory provides justification for ecopreneurship. Based on this theory, there is a possibility of enhancing economic growth by giving more priority to the environment. According to Tillery and Young (2009), the theory discourages the trading off of economic growth for environmental quality. Capitalism is seen as a key driver of sustainability and solutions to environmental challenges. That is, the capitalist system focus on innovation can be tapped to improve the environment (Beveridge & Guy, 2005).

Murphy (2000) further argued that proponents of ecological modernization posit that the environmental challenged faced globally today are motivators of future industrialization and economic development. Moreover, the theory advocates for gradual modernization of the institutions of modern society. In this course, entrepreneurs are the key agents of change to prevent an ecological crisis (Mol, 1995). Consequently, the role of the entrepreneur is to provide the most advanced solutions to environmental issues. In this regard, the current generation of ecopreneurs aims to combine environmental awareness and traditional entrepreneurial activity to attain sustainable development.

4. MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The term ‘entrepreneur’ can be interpreted to mean ‘taking a step to bridge.’ An entrepreneur is an individual who engages in the speedy process of bringing together money, ideas, resources, and people. Although all entrepreneurs deal with linking activities between customers and supplies in step to create and reform market, ecopreneurs are different from conventional entrepreneurs because they also build bridges between environmental progress and market thrive (Schaltegger, 2002).

Entrepreneurs are agents of opening a new company while entrepreneurship is a term used to explain the knowhow of creation and establishment of a new company (Ripsas, 1997). Entrepreneurs are also considered as people who strive for growth and enlargement companies as well as the expansion of businesses (Kyrö, 2001). Entrepreneurship has also been described as a social movement or some other aspect of the environmental grass-roots movement (Pastakia, 1998). From this stand, entrepreneurs are actors who transform the existing patterns of production and consumption on the basis of personal initiatives. Traditional companies are distinguished from entrepreneurs because of their ability to innovate and create their competitive advantage (Staber, 1997; Wiklund, 1999). Lastly, entrepreneurs are characterized by their ability to lead, involve in forming a team and being committed to it (Keogh & Polonsky, 1998; Schaltegger, 2002).

Starting a business to increase income is one of the top reasons why entrepreneurs venture into business. Many people are driven by the need to achieve economic freedom and financial security that enables one to live a comfortable life together with the children and spouse. An entrepreneur is also motivated by a more significant personal income that gives one a chance to build substantial wealth for self and family for the present and future generations. Ramadani (2014) notes that entrepreneurs grow new ventures with the desire to increase their income and provide financial security for themselves and their family. Moreover, an entrepreneur starts a business because of family and legacy where one is motivated by the need to further build a company for the continuation of a family tradition begun by the parents and grandparents. This tradition keeps the entrepreneur on toes so that children can inherit the business, set an outstanding example for them, and follow the example of a person that the entrepreneur admires be it in the family or outside. Furthermore, the desire for career control, make money without limitation or control from other people, achieve set ambitions, and have monetary liberty are the motivations behind the start of own businesses by entrepreneurs.

The desire for independence is another significant motivator for many people to join entrepreneurship (Gough and Langevang, 2016). This involves an individual taking responsibility for one's action in life instead of living off the efforts of other people. An individual uses own judgment, stops following the assertions of other people as well as saying no to being dependent on another person's business. This desire for independence may start small, but the entrepreneur is willing to do it because of the strong desire to become a boss on his or her own. Such an entrepreneur does not often listen to the suggestions of other people and are less likely to work within any limitations, and may not ask for permission from anyone before initiating an action since they are geared towards being independent and stop putting energy and time in working for the dreams of others each day. Such entrepreneurs may have been forced to undertake assignments they do not want while working for the goal of another person thus desire for freedom to work for their course in life. Also, entrepreneurs desire to take responsibility for their entrepreneurial activities and results (Kariv, 2013). Many people have been inspired by the need for financial independence even though money may not solve each problem but may make life easier. Percy (2010) agree that the desire for economic freedom justifies why entrepreneurs are building businesses to secure and increase income in the family and achieve a decent living standard in the family.

Many entrepreneurs have been motivated by the need for achievement and solving an enormous difficulty (Percy, 2010). The driving ethics in need for success include the strong yearning to realize a mission that gives one the passion, power, and courage to persistently work over several years with the urge to reach set goals. Entrepreneurs need achievement hence are engaged in activities that demand a high degree of responsibility, effort, and skill for outcomes as well as clear feedback on performance and a substantial degree of risk.

Also, entrepreneurs are motivated by the insistent love for a startup they like. This love drives a startup owner to survive the hardest time of the process that the business goes through. The entrepreneur is enthused by the work that is geared towards filling a part of one's life, and the starter works to satisfy the desire by doing what one believes to be great work. The passion and the desire to develop a business is a driving force towards successful entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur is motivated by the long-lasting love coupled with the persistent love for the startup notwithstanding the tests that one meets on the way hence can survive to the end. Furthermore, the process of building a venture is uneasy and demands a lot of work. Thus one should be passionate and love their work to cope with the challenges that entrepreneurship brings. Passion and love in a venture motivate one to dedicate effort over an extended period as a project may take longer to take shape.

5. MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR ECOPRENEURSHIP

The motivations factors for ecopreneurship are multifaceted like those of entrepreneurship but are distinguished by strong ethical reasoning as ecopreneurship are into running a venture with the conservation of the environment in mind. One of the factors that motivate ecopreneurs to start businesses is the underlying green values. They desire to spread their green values to the other people in the society and are inspired to spread their venture and environmentalism using different forums such as word of mouth, visiting expos and markets, social media, and websites to sell their service or products to consumers and friends. The ecopreneurs are apprehensive with the younger generations hence make them aware of the concerns in the environment. Ecopreneurs do business that has less harmful effects on the environment. For instance, ecopreneurs strive to limit paper waste through upcycling of paper waste and also educating people against tossing out their trash, an act which reduces the harmful effects on the environment. This leads to the popularization of eco-friendly innovations and ideas through the market and non-market ways. Kirkwood and Walton (2010) argue that the green value is interwoven with the ecopreneur who sees a gap in the market thus never engages in exploiting opportunities in the market which trample green values.

The other motivating factor is the existence of a gap in the market for services and products that are friendly to the environment. Ecopreneurs desire ventures that support issues in the environment because many individuals will comprehend the existing challenges in the environment and how they will be significantly developed through green businesses. The motivation in this is that people are going back to the past to look for ideas that are less harmful to the environment and view them as opportunities for a new venture and are aligned to the interest and the expertise of an ecopreneur.

Furthermore, the monetary motivation of ecopreneurs is apparent. The ecopreneurs are not into the business to make a lot of profits but are aligned with the need for earning some money to offset living expenses or cover costs. They view their ventures as important to the society but argue that in the pursuance of this, monetary value will flow in on their own and thus does not pay so much devotion to profits as this is not being

their primary objective. The profit earned is just enough for offsetting daily living expenses and provision of allowances. Ecopreneurs prefer educating people to earn profits because life does not entail keeping and loading wealth, but what is contributed to the society is significant. According to Kirkwood and Walton (2010), ecopreneurs are not driven by profits, but the venture needs to make enough money to support lifestyle, families, and be sustainable.

Passion is another motivating factor for the venture by ecopreneurs. Most people who go into ecopreneurship have an ingrained passion for the environment and even invites other people to join the noble cause so as to make something out of the environment. It is a common occurrence for ecopreneurs to have a big passion for the environment and eco-services or eco-products offered for sale (Kirkwood and Walton, 2010). Ecopreneurs have resilient green values that are closely linked with passion about the environment thus have a passion for the reduction of the degradation of the environment. Also, their passion for services and products they offer to motivate them to venture into ecopreneurship.

6. COMPARISON OF MOTIVATIONS BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURS AND ECOPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs have different motivations that drive them to start ventures. For instance, one key difference is the inner tension that ecopreneurs go through since they often grapple with the choice between going green and making profits in their ventures (Santini, 2017). They combine the desire to change the world, and the need to make money hence have to manage the ideals and profits contraposition. Also, ecopreneurs are strongly linked with the external environment of the firm thus they can shape the company from the start and impact the competitive surrounding. Entrepreneurs, on the other hand, are out to make money in their ventures to achieve financial freedom, offer comfort for self and the family as well as provide financial security without minding the impact of their actions on the environment.

Entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs both yearn for independence when setting up businesses. The motive here is to create a small world of their own and take control over their lives. These people do not like to work for somebody else thus choose not to offer services to anyone in any office. The choice for independence has also motivated both entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs as they yearn to showcase their talents and hobbies and make a living out of them. This is in line with Kirkwood and Walton (2010) who posit that ecopreneurs want to be own boss and own a business. For entrepreneurs, the desire to be own boss is seen as they do not want to have any limitations in place of work, thus starting a business means an entrepreneur will initiate an action without asking for consent from anyone. They hunger for taking assignments they want to perform and work for the success of the venture rather than working for the dream of another individual.

Lastly, love and passion bring both entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs together. For ecopreneurs, the passion for the environment is a motivating factor for starting a business. For example, passion is ingrained in need to stop the degradation of the environment. A

person starts a business purposely to play a role in reducing environmental degradation and does not need to make profits necessarily. For entrepreneurs, the love for a starting a business is the crucial source of motivation. This love is important because it moves one to do what is believed to be great work drives one to make the business survive in case of challenges along the way and endeavors until the business takes shape.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore what motivates ecopreneurs to start businesses. In conclusion, motivating factors of ecopreneurs are many. One of the factors that motivate ecopreneurs to start businesses is the underlying green values. The other motivating factor is the existence of a gap in the market for services and products that are friendly to the environment. Furthermore, the monetary motivation of ecopreneurs is apparent. The ecopreneurs are not into the business to make a lot of profits but are aligned with the need for earning some money to offset living expenses or cover costs. Passion is another motivating factor for the venture by ecopreneurs. Most people who go into ecopreneurship have an ingrained passion for the environment and even invites other people to join the noble cause so as to make something out of the environment. The primary limitation of the present study is that it was not an empirical study, but a literature review.

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