

## **The profile of women managers, market orientation and organizational performance: A conceptual theoretical revision for the construction of a cognitive model**

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### **Abstract**

The profile of women in managerial positions has been analyzed in a descriptive way, limited to sociodemographic variables as the main determinants, but no studies have been found to analyze, from a gender perspective, the profile of female entrepreneurs in the effects of the market orientation on the organizational results of companies.

Therefore it is considered important to develop a theoretical model for this purpose arises:

- 1) Design, based on the literature consulted, a cognitive model, which describes the relationship between the profile of female entrepreneurs and market orientation.
- 2) To know the determinants of the profile of the female entrepreneurs that are in the directions of the organizations.

This study is considered of a descriptive scope in function of documentary revision, therefore its methodological approach is transversal and exploratory through review of academic articles contained in databases of different virtual libraries. Its main contribution is the theoretical construction of a model that shows that there are four dimensions that determine the profile of women who hold management positions in companies and their relationship with market orientation.

### **Entrepreneurship, Gender, Market orientation, Managerial profile**

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## Introduction

The orientation to the market is an approach that combines the marketing activities of the company and its strategic direction, therefore it becomes an intangible resource of the business that provides commitment and information for the development of a value offer that fully satisfies the needs and preferences of clients, appears between the 80s and 90s. From that moment on, many jobs began to study the relationship between market orientation and other variables.

Several investigations (Cauzo & Cossío, 2012) (Ospina & Pérez, 2013) (Ynzunza & Izar, 2013) (Ruiz, 2014) point out that there is a relationship between the market orientation and the institutional results that are reflected in the creation of value for customers that has an impact on better sales levels and financial effects favorable to the management of companies. On the other hand, other authors point out that there is a relationship between the profile of managers and organizational performance (Echeverri, 2015) (Torrejón, 2016) (Hernández, Armenteros, Villanueva, Montalvo, & Del Rio, 2016).

Some studies analyze the profile of women in a descriptive way (Matteo, 2012) (Morales, 2011) but no studies have been found that analyze, from a gender perspective, the relationship between the profile of women who are in the direction of the companies and the orientation to the market and consequently the organizational performance. As for the women's ventures Moreno (2015) Ventura and Quero (2012) characterize the dynamics of women's ventures, the success factors, their process, their environment competitiveness, taking into account women as generators of economic movement in their regions and indicating that the promotion of women's enterprises gives rise to economic empowerment, from a theoretical gender perspective.

Therefore, it is considered important to develop a theoretical model that explains the influence of the profile of women entrepreneurs in the effects of market orientation on the organizational results of companies.

Therefore, in this article we propose:

- 1) Design, based on the literature consulted, a cognitive model that describes the relationship between the profile of women entrepreneurs and market orientation.
- 2) Know the determinants of the profile of entrepreneur women who are in the addresses of organizations.

This study is considered to be descriptive in terms of documentary review, therefore, its methodological approach is transversal and exploratory through review of academic articles contained in scientific information resources such as Scielo, Bolivian Journals, Latindex, and PERii virtual libraries.

The main result is the theoretical construction of a model that shows that there are four dimensions that determine the profile of women who hold managerial positions in companies and their relationship with market orientation+3.

Future lines of research are also determined, such as the need to determine if the theoretically described relationship is evidenced by empirical information; analysis of the willingness to orient to the market by differentiating the production or services sector and the analysis of the effects of market orientation and the profile of the directives according to the size of the company.

## Conceptual and descriptive development

### Market orientation

Being oriented to the market, in its basic definition, is to assume the need to be proactively oriented to the external environment of the company, continuously generating value for the target population in order to ensure its sustainable permanence in the market.

In this sense Alvarez et al. (2001) indicates that to the extent that companies adopt market orientation as an organizational culture will no longer emphasize, in the use of techniques or activities of classic marketing but focus their attention on the continuous generation of value for the target audience as a way to ensure their own long-term survival.

Consequently, market orientation can be considered an organizational resource (Ynzunza & Izar, 2013). As an organizational resource, market orientation, in strategic terms, is a source of competitive advantage whose development and exploitation has a direct impact on the finances of companies. This mentioned impact is achieved through the generation of value.

In this sense, a company that assumes market orientation can improve its profitability, adapts better to the demand of its product or service and achieves a greater value in customer satisfaction.

That is, it allows us to guide the strategies of the companies in satisfying the needs and tastes of the clients (Pinzón et al., 2013)

According to Jaworski and Kohli (1993) the paradigm of market orientation is based on the assumption that firms gain and sustain a competitive advantage if they know the changing needs of the market.

The concept of market orientation is determined by three constructs: customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter-functional coordination (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993, Narver & Slater, 1990, Ynzunza & Izar, 2013).

The customer-oriented construct refers to the actions of the company aimed at providing quality products and services in order to generate value. For its part, the competitive orientation construct means analyzing and building a competitive advantage and the third construct, the coordination between organizational functions, refers to sharing information and integrating the different departments.

### The prospects of market orientation

There are four perspectives from which the meaning of market orientation can be understood: (1) as a business philosophy; (2) as processing of market information; (3) as interfunctional coordination; and (4) as a resource based on organizational learning (Alvarez, Santos, & Vázquez, 2001)

But there are two main perspectives: The cultural perspective that indicates that market orientation is a management philosophy is to say an organizational culture with objectives, beliefs and values aimed at customer satisfaction (Narver & Slater, 1990). and the behavioral perspective that refers to the fact that organizations must collect information in a coordinated, systematic and continuous way of their market in order to know the needs of their customers, the global offer and the behavior of competitors.

Only in this way can it have sustainability and competitive advantage (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990) (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993).

The combination of both perspectives will have better results, since companies that take market orientation as an organizational culture must accompany this philosophy by carrying out their organizational actions based on the analysis of market information.

### Women's ventures

Several studies have proved that the ventures arise due to the market opportunity or the need to obtain their own income: Morales, Bustamante, Vargas, Pérez, and Sereno (2015); Ormeño (2014); Escandón and Arias (2011); Moreno and Spirit (2010).

The concept of entrepreneurship has had a considerable evolution since the nineteenth century to the present, Castiblanco Moreno in 2013, makes a synthesis of the definitions of authors such as Richard Cantillón (1755); Jean Baptiste Say (1803); Marshall (1880); Schumpeter (1942) among others, arriving at the conclusion that the definition of entrepreneurship with a gender focus is not completely constructed (Moreno, 2013).

The studies of Moreno (2015) Ventura and Quero (2012) characterize the dynamics of women's ventures, the success factors, their process, their competitiveness environment, taking into account women as generators of economic movement in their regions and indicating that the promotion of women's enterprises gives rise to economic empowerment, from a theoretical gender perspective.

According to Ortiz, Duque and Camargo (2008), documents have been found that analyze the intentions to undertake their differences according to gender, among the most important ones we can mention the works of Cromie (1987), Kourilsk Walstad (1998); Sarri Trihopoulou (2004); Langowitz Minniti (2007).

In general, the conditions, intentions and motivations to undertake are different in both sexes. According to Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd (2005), the variables or factors that explain the performance of the ventures are the individual motivations (need for control, motivation to achieve, ability to take risks, tolerance to uncertainty); social motivations (culture, social capital) economic motivations (employment opportunities, employment discrimination, market conditions: business opportunities, access to financial support networks, work raw materials).

Based on the study of the motives for entrepreneurship, authors such as Cromie (1987), Kourilsk Walstad (1998), Sarri Trihopoulou (2004), Langowitz Minniti (2007), Casero, Escobedo, and Jiménez, (2007) have concluded that both, women men, seek autonomy in their income.

However, for them the most important thing is the satisfaction of the needs of their children; presenting greater aversion to risk perceiving fewer advantages in the business environment, ie the perception of good opportunities and the fear of failure depend on sex.

On the other hand, Rodriguez et al. (2011) indicates that the idea of creating the business, as the development of it is conditioned by the reproductive life care of dependent family members, which evidences the assumption of the multiple responsibilities of businesswoman mother / wife / daughter / housewife.

Therefore, the desire to achieve the welfare of the children of the family provide them with better living conditions, appears as the main motivation to start their business experience.

### **Profile of the directives**

Most of the studies are related to the profile of managers based on competencies and without a gender focus, among these we can mention Torrejón (2016) who discusses the importance of cross-cutting competences for the success of entrepreneurial entrepreneurship; Rodríguez (2016) that relates how the evolution of marketing in MSMEs directly impacts on the development of the competencies of managers who manage organizations immersed in a global scenario; Santos-Álvarez and García-Merino, (2016) analyze the motivational orientation that drives entrepreneurs to internationalization and their information preferences.

Vargas and Campos (2013) compare the effectiveness in the development of the entrepreneurial skills of young people based on the entrepreneurial promotion programs of three public universities in Mexico.

The relationship between the profile of managers and organizational performance is explained as the determination and evaluation of the peculiar features that characterize the ability to make decisions, the relationship with the business environment and the improvement of business conditioning in the market (Echeverri, 2015 )

Studies that incorporate the gender perspective are descriptive in order to identify the sociodemographic profiles of women managers (Morales C. C., 2011, Matteo, 2012)

### **Methodology**

The work is an exploratory, descriptive investigation for the following reasons:

Exploratory; it constitutes an initial step to the research process because they consist of exploring or examining the object of study to specify the design of the research. According to Malhotra, (2004) this type of research is carried out in order to formulate or define a problem with more precision, identify the various actions to be followed, establish hypotheses, isolate the variables, fundamental relationships for further analysis, obtain knowledge in order to establish the method to face the problem to establish priorities for research.

Descriptive; They seek to specify the important properties of people, groups, communities or any other phenomenon that is subject to analysis. The dimensions and variables that are part of the explanatory model will be described.

The entire research process is governed by the review of the theoretical information of the object of study, the variables and dimensions were conceptualized for the construction of an explanatory model.

For the selection of the articles, the database of the Vice Ministry of Science and Technology of the Plurinational State of Bolivia was taken as reference, which constitutes the electronic resources available free of charge for the Bolivian University system.

This database is made up of Scielo Bolivia, which is a collection of Bolivian magazines; Bolivian Magazines, which is a collection of scientific, technical, technological and academic dissemination magazines; Latindex with magazines available in digital newspaper archives of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, adhered to the open access movement and Virtual Libraries PERii international electronic resource with access to scientific information in various areas of knowledge.

The search was made in a systematic way taking into account the following topics for the literature review:

- Articles about ventures.
- Articles on market orientation.
- Articles about management profiles and values.
- Articles on social capital.
- Articles on human capital and organizational learning.

The search gave the following detail:

THEMES	N° OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE
Organizational learning and human capital	6	13%
Social capital	7	15%
Entrepreneurship	16	33%
Market orientation	10	21%
Directives and values profile	9	19%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1.** Themes and articles reviewed

Source: *Self made.*

Once the articles were selected, a stage of analysis of the central aspects and the main conclusions contributed by the investigations with respect to the variables object of study of the present article was initiated.

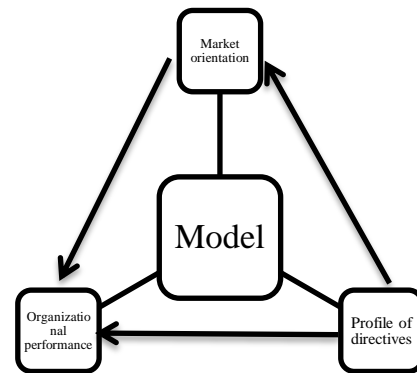
In this way it was possible to conceptually define the variables, establish their relationships and build the cognitive model presented below.

**Explanatory cognitive model**

Market orientation is a complementary asset that contributes to improving the performance of the company (Villao, 2016) (Flores, Ojeda, Lee Kim, & Ramírez, 2016) therefore a direct causal relationship between these two variables is recorded.

On the other hand, the profile of managers according to Gomez (2008) managers shape and shape the values and market orientation and therefore that profile affects the performance of the company. In this sense the relationship between market orientation and the profile of the directives is direct.

But also the profile of managers has a direct and positive relationship with organizational performance. (Echeverri, 2015) (Hernández, Armenteros, Villanueva, Montalvo, & Del Rio, 2016) The relationships described are shown in the following diagram:



**Figure 1.** Relationship between the three variables of the model

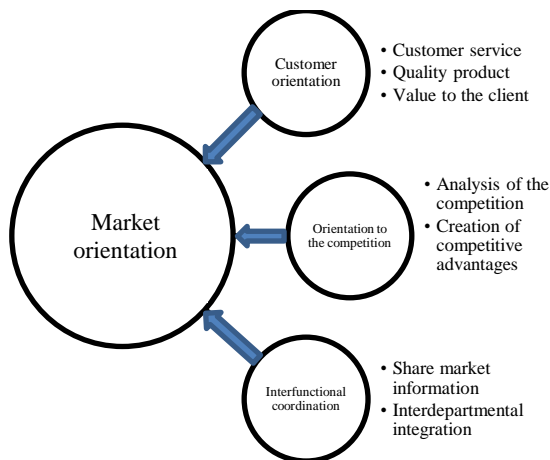
Source: *Own elaboration*

The market orientation variable serves as a mediating variable between the profile of the directives and the organizational performance.

The orientation to the market will be determined by a double cultural and operative perspective, therefore it implies customer orientation, serving it, providing quality products and ultimately generating value; orientation to competition, analyzing and building a competitive advantage and coordinating between organizational functions, sharing information and integrating the actions of the different departments.

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But also must be oriented to the benefit as a way to demonstrate organizational performance. (Alvarez, Santos, & Vázquez, 2001) (Narver & Slater, 1990) (Hurley & Hult, 1998)



**Figure 2.** Determinants of market orientation.

Source: Self made

The determination of the profile of the directives that is the objective of this article is explained below.

### Dimensions of the entrepreneur profile

There are studies that have determined the dimensions for the measurement of the profile of female entrepreneurs who are directives of the companies, one of them raises that there are three dimensions that determine the aforementioned profile:

1. Orientation to the task that highlights the profession, training, entrepreneurial spirit.
2. Interpersonal orientation that includes teamwork, empathy, new ideas and responsibility.
3. Cognitive skills referred to the capacity of abstraction and association of ideas, creativity and innovation, inclusion of new ideas. (Morales C. C., 2011).

Also Echeverri (2015) in his study of the competitive profile of small business managers takes into account three types of skills: Operational skills: are the skills or competencies that enable effective performance in the workplace. Interpersonal skills: are skills or competencies that relate to success in tasks that involve interpersonal contact with others for the proper performance of the job and managerial skills: are the skills or competencies to direct others within the organization.

Studies that specifically analyze female profiles are restricted to studying sociodemographic factors (age, educational level, marital status, child custody, positions they occupy) as determinants of the profile of directives (Matteo, 2012).

Taking into account the previous studies and paying attention to the motivations to undertake and the specific conditions of women as directors of companies, their profile must be determined by factors such as human capital, social capital, learning style and values.

### Human capital

The theory of human capital indicates that education is the determining variable of success in the labor market (Pico, Quejada, & Yáñez, 2012). A greater education possibilities of higher productivity and income.

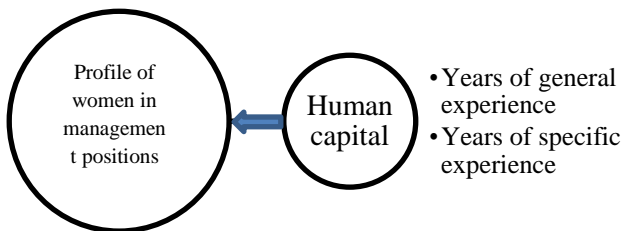
Therefore investment decisions in training bring future benefits higher than the costs of training.

Regarding human capital as a determinant of the profile of the executives, it is explained that the educational level and continuous training are two aspects that determine a good level of human capital (Barbosa & Ayala, 2012) (Pérez & Serrano, 2013)

According to Morales, it refers to socio-demographic aspects such as age, marital status and number of children; and a set of productive capacities that an individual acquires by accumulation of general or specific knowledge and that can be stored and used, in this case they will be referred to the level of instruction, the general and specific experience. (Morales and Pineda, 2015)

In the case of women who are in management positions, variables such as years of general experience and years of specific experience will be taken into account.

Therefore the relationship is presented as follows:



**Figure 3.** Human capital as a determinant of women's profile.

Source: *Self made*

### ***Social capital***

The current bibliography indicates that the analysis of this variable is centered on the study of the role of social capital in the dynamics of the process of entrepreneurship. Among the most cited authors are Davidsson Honig (2003) who study the role of human social capital in the development of entrepreneurship.

Social capital is understood as the set of social relations based on trust reciprocal cooperation behaviors.

This concept appears in the 90s with the studies of authors such as Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam and Portes.

For Bourdieu, social capital is like a network of objective relationships, of domination or subordination, of complementarity or antagonism (Bourdieu, 2006).

For Durston (1999), social capital encompasses norms, institutions, organizations that promote trust, cooperation among people, communities, society as a whole.

This social capital is important for female entrepreneurs as explained by Ventura Quero (2012), indicating that participation in social networks becomes a critical factor in the decision to become an entrepreneur the subsequent result of the action to undertake.

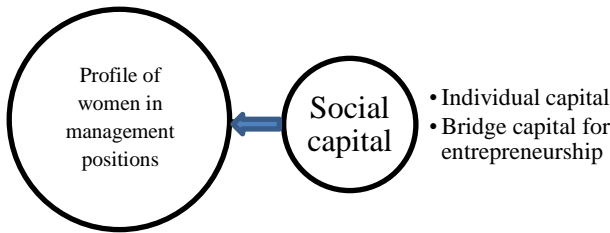
As social capital for women is the support of the family, useful to lessen the family burden but also takes into account a social capital that comes from institutions or a network outside the family ties that helps to build bridges for the start-up of entrepreneurship Precisely, the work of Liñán Santos (2006) differentiate two types of social capital: cognitive social capital binding cognitive social capital that builds bridges.

The first one is based on strong ties derived from kinship or friendship relationships.

The social capital that builds bridges derives from the individual's relationships with certain business networks.

Therefore, this capital can also be considered as determining the profile of women in management positions.





**Figure 4.** Social capital as a determinant of women's profile.

Source: *Self made*

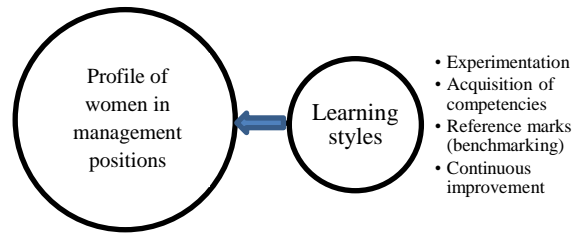
**Learning style**

Organizational learning is considered as the ability of companies to create, organize and process information from their sources and thus generate new knowledge (Gálvez, Contreras, & Maldonado, 2013)

According to Gómez et. al, (2015) citing Yeung et al., (2000) indicates that organizations learn through 2 basic sources: 1) direct experience, where they learn as a result of their own actions and reflections; and 2) the experience of third parties, which is based on what is learned from them, as advisors, suppliers or competitors, as well as including learning by observation. Organizational learning has four dimensions: commitment to learning, open-mindedness, shared vision and the exchange of knowledge (Hurley & Hult, 1998).

As a determinant of the profile of women in management positions, learning is not analyzed taking into account the dimensions but rather taking into account the learning styles. Learning styles are ideal types to learn (Gómez, Villarreal, & Villarreal, 2015), in the business field the style of learning and the generation of knowledge is a key to guarantee the permanence of the business in the market but also to generate its own growth. (Fernández, Alegre, & Chiva, 2012)

According to Arias (2014) and Gómez et. to the. (2015), learning styles are the strategies that people use to assimilate, incorporate and process new information. Organizations have 4 styles to learn: 1) experimentation, where you learn by trying new ideas and adopting a receptive position of the environment; 2) acquisition of competences, which consists of the acquisition of new skills by people and teams, focuses on the experience of third parties; 3) reference marks (benchmarking) you learn by finding out how others work and from there try to adapt this knowledge; and 4) continuous improvement, where you learn by improving what was already done constantly.



**Figure 5.** Learning styles as a determinant of women's profile.

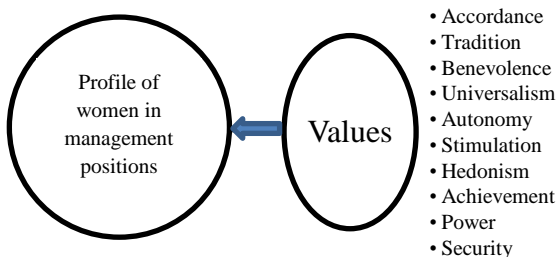
Source: *Self made*

**Values**

Values are motivational constructs that orient people's lives toward desirable goals. Both Rondan, Navarro and Arenas (2016) and Navarro (2011) can analyze 10 values in managers:

- Autonomy: what is independence and self-confidence, and gratification based on their own decision and action capabilities;
- Stimulus: oriented to emotion, novelty and the challenge of a varied, exciting, daring and curious life;

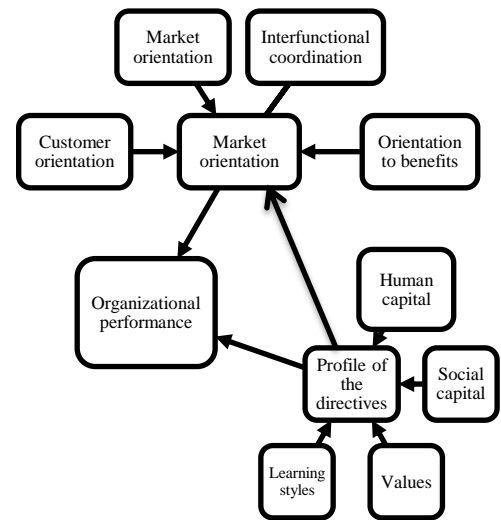
- Hedonism: centered on organic needs and the pursuit of pleasure associated with their satisfaction and the sensual gratification of the subject;
- Achievement: o the pursuit of personal success and demonstration of socially established competences;
- Power: whose objective is to achieve status of achievement and social prestige, and control or domination of others and existing resources;
- Security: that pursues the harmony and stability of society, of interpersonal relationships and of the self;
- Conformity: that seeks to restrict actions and potential impulses that may alter or harm others, and / or violate social expectations;
- Tradition: whose motivation is respect, dedication and acceptance of the proper customs of the subject's culture or religion;
- Benevolence: prosocial value, concerned about the well-being of others through daily interaction;
- Universalism: whose objective is the attainment of the welfare of all people and nature in general, being broader than Benevolence.



**Figure 6.** Values as a determinant of women's profile.  
Source: *Self made*

**Complete cognitive model**

Depending on the definition of the variables, the model that will explain the relationships between the variables: market orientation, the profile of the directives and organizational performance is integrated as follows:



**Figure 7.** Complete cognitive model.  
Source: *Self made*

**Conclusions**

The objective of this paper was to present the design of a cognitive model, which describes the relationship between the profile of women entrepreneurs and market orientation.

As a first conclusion it can be indicated that in the majority of the studies they take separately the variables subject of study; that is to say, the determinants of the profile of executives and their relation to the performance of the company on the one hand and on the other the influence of the orientation to the market with the success of the companies are studied.

There are few works that integrate the two variables mentioned in the study of women entrepreneurs who are in the organizations' directions and this is the second conclusion found.

The conceptualisation used for the variable orientation to the market in all the reviewed works has a coincidence as far as the combination of the theoretical approach, take to the orientation of the market as behavioral combined with the organizational culture, this constitutes the third conclusion.

A fourth conclusion would be about the general profile of managers because the results of research have not been raised from a gender perspective, are mostly about skills and competencies, the few studies referring to the profile of women entrepreneurs pay more attention in socio-demographic characteristics.

The fifth conclusion is that the studies that have linked the profile of managers with organizational performance do so from the perspective of internationalization of companies.

On organizational performance the sixth conclusion of the review is the relationship of business performance with learning styles and with the values of managers: on the values most of the studies coincide with the theoretical basis of Schwartz that from social psychology constitutes a theory of universal structure of the motivational content of values with a cross-cultural validity (González & Arciniega, 2015). Regarding learning styles, a scale of four is used: Experimentation, acquisition of competences, reference marks (benchmarking) and continuous improvement, either at the organizational level or at the individual level.

In all articles dealing with the profile of managers is related to human capital, values and style of arpendizaje but does not establish the relationship that may exist between this variable and social capital, this is the seventh conclusion.

The eighth conclusion refers to social capital; for the conceptual analysis of this determinant, the main authors have been reviewed and it has been shown that the studies place special importance on the relationship between this type of capital and the enterprises that are owned by women; but no direct relationship has been established between social capital and the profile of women managers, even worse their relationship with market orientation and organizational performance.

The latter is due to the fact that most studies focus on studying market orientation only from the general perspective and do not take into account the gender approach.

Based on the previous analysis, some lines of research are proposed that are considered to be useful for those who wish to deepen this topic:

- It is necessary to determine if the theoretically described relationship is evidenced with empirical information.
- Analyze the willingness to orient to the market by differentiating production or services sector.
- Analyze the effects of market orientation and the profile of the directives according to the size of the company.

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