



ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AND BELO HORIZONTE CRAFT BREWERIES

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Abstract

Objective: To understand the entrepreneurial orientation of Craft breweries located at the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Specifically, this study focused on characterizing the historical trajectory of the creation and development of the studied Craft breweries; and on identifying the composition of the entrepreneurial orientation of each studied case, taking into account the theoretical categories related to this approach.

Method/Approach: Multiple case studies with breweries from the region of Belo Horizonte. Four interviews were carried out, followed by a content analysis, besides a data triangulation with passive observation of the companies and a document analysis.

Originality/Relevance: The study approaches the entrepreneurial orientation with a regional focus on an industry that presents economic growth and is still poorly studied with an entrepreneurship theory basis.

Results: Due to the local competition, the companies investigated in the research presented a composition of the entrepreneurial orientation dimensions, with the predominance of proactivity, followed by innovation, and, in a lesser level, risk-taking.

Theoretical/methodological Contribution: Exploring the focus on regionality as a methodological resource, allowed the researchers to access different strategic and entrepreneurial dynamics of the studied companies, highlighting similarities and differences in terms of entrepreneurial orientation from a regional perspective.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial orientation. Regionality. Craft breweries.

ORIENTAÇÃO EMPREENDEDORA E AS CERVEJARIAS ARTESANAIS DE BELO HORIZONTE

Resumo

Objetivo do estudo: Compreender a orientação empreendedora de cervejarias artesanais, situadas na Região Metropolitana de Belo Horizonte. Especificamente, objetiva-se caracterizar a trajetória histórica de criação e desenvolvimento das cervejarias artesanais estudadas; e identificar a formação da orientação empreendedora em cada caso pesquisado, considerando as categorias teóricas pertinentes à referida abordagem.

Metodologia/abordagem: Estudo de casos múltiplos com cervejarias da região. Foram realizadas quatro entrevistas com empreendedores, seguidas por uma análise de conteúdo, além da triangulação de dados com observação passiva das empresas estudadas e análise documental.

Originalidade/Relevância: O estudo aborda a orientação empreendedora com um foco regional de um setor que está em

crescimento e que ainda é pouco estudado sob a ótica do empreendedorismo.

Principais resultados: Devido à competitividade local, as empresas investigadas apresentaram uma composição das dimensões da orientação empreendedora com predominância da proatividade, seguida pela inovação, e um nível menor de assunção de riscos.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas: O enfoque da regionalidade como um recurso metodológico possibilitou o acesso a diferentes dinâmicas estratégicas e empreendedoras das organizações estudadas, ressaltando tanto semelhanças como diferenças em termos de orientação empreendedora em uma perspectiva regional.

Palavras-chave: Empreendedorismo. Orientação empreendedora. Cervejarias artesanais. Regionalidade.

ORIENTACIÓN EMPREENDEDORA Y CERVECERÍAS ARTESANALES DE BELO HORIZONTE

Resumen

Objetivo: Comprender la orientación emprendedora de cervecerías artesanales de la región metropolitana de Belo Horizonte. Específicamente, este estudio se centra en caracterizar la trayectoria de creación y desarrollo de las cervecerías estudiadas; y en identificar la composición de la orientación emprendedora de cada caso estudiado, considerando las categorías teóricas relacionadas con ese abordaje.

Método: Casos de estudios múltiples de cervecerías artesanales de la región de Belo Horizonte. Cuatro entrevistas fueron realizadas, seguidas de análisis de contenido, y triangulación de datos con una observación pasiva de las empresas y análisis documental.

Originalidad/Relevancia: El estudio se centra en la orientación emprendedora con un foco en una industria que presenta un crecimiento y que, todavía, no tiene estudios con teorías de espíritu emprendedor.

Resultados: Debido a la competición local las empresas estudiadas presentaron una predominancia de la proactividad, seguida por la innovación, y por la asunción de riesgo, en un nivel menor.

Aporte Teórico: Explorar el énfasis en la regionalidad como un recurso metodológico, permitió acceder diferentes dinámicas estratégicas de las empresas estudiadas, resaltando similitudes y diferencias en términos de la orientación emprendedora con un punto de vista regional.

Palabras clave: Orientación emprendedora. Proactividad. Innovación. Cervecerías artesanales.

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1 Introduction

Beer is one of the most popular alcoholic beverages in the world, and in Brazil it is the favorite of consumers (Fisher, 2018). The Brazilian craft beer market had uninterrupted growth in the last two decades. With only 33 breweries in 1999, Brazil reached 1209 breweries twenty years later. Minas Gerais is a state that stands out in this sector, being the third largest in number of registered producers, with 163 producers and presenting an annual average growth of 36% in the last 3 years (MAPA, 2020).

In the Minas Gerais scenario, the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (MRBH) is prominent not only locally but also nationally. There are more than 50 breweries in the locality, being Nova Lima the third city in the country in number of companies in the sector, with 22 breweries, and Belo Horizonte the seventh, with 15 breweries (MAPA, 2020). It is worth noting that there was only one brewery in the region in 1999 (Mendonça, 2020). Many local producers have national projection and the region's consumer potential is worthy of attention. The MRBH consists of more than fifty cities and has about 6 million inhabitants (IBGE, 2019). Belo Horizonte city hall (2021) mapped the existence of about 9,200 pubs, being the city with more establishments like these in the country, which indicates a culture of alcoholic beverages consumption in the region.

The importance of the craft beer sector in the MRBH was recognized by the Government of Minas Gerais in 2017. Based on an enactment, the region received the title of brewery hub, which allowed the region to be configured as a Local Productive Arrangement. (LPA). This regime allows the joint purchase of inputs, loans acquisition and special tariff regimes, which helps in the further development of the sector (Graciano, 2017). Thus, it is possible to observe the configuration of a particular market, which presents dynamism and competitiveness. The growth of companies created in the sector makes it possible to carry out studies focusing on entrepreneurship.

In the literature and scientific production field about entrepreneurship, there is a discussion regarding its conceptual delimitation, which ranges from the entrepreneur's behavioral issues to an economic view about the manifestation of entrepreneurship (Vale, 2014). Thus, taking into account the different dimensions of the entrepreneurship study field, the entrepreneurial orientation is presented as a relevant approach for the analysis of the entrepreneurial phenomenon in general, and it is adequate to understand and explain the particularities of the craft brewery sector (Carmona *et al.*, 2018; Müller & Silveira-Martins, 2018).

Evidences from studies on the subject suggest that there is a positive relation between entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance (Miller, 1983; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Covin & Slevin, 1989; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005; Martens & Freitas, 2008; Wang, 2008; Martens *et al.*, 2015; Covin & Wales, 2019), a fact that reveals the importance of studies that explore the categories of entrepreneurial orientation and how they are configured in different contexts and activity sectors, such as the segment of craft beers.

Then, based on the raised points above, this paper explores the following research question: how is the entrepreneurial orientation of craft breweries located in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte configured? To answer this question, the general objective of this article is to understand the entrepreneurial orientation of craft breweries located in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Specifically, it aims to characterize the historical trajectory of creation and development of the studied craft breweries; and identify the construction of entrepreneurial orientation in each studied case, taking into account the theoretical categories concerning that approach.

2 Entrepreneurship approaches

The “entrepreneur” term has been used since the 18th century, at least. Several meanings were given to the word, such as, the one who controls a company, who builds works, who is a mediator, among others (Vale, 2014). However, the entrepreneurship term has only become a study field of management in the last 40 years, with no consensus on the conceptual, ontological and epistemological aspects associated with understanding and explaining the phenomenon (Vale, 2014; Borges, Lima & Brito, 2017).

Thus, several approaches have been explored over time. Initial definitions vary around notions that categorize the entrepreneur as a businessperson or business owner (Miller, 1983; Martens, Freitas & Boissin, 2010; Vale, 2014). This approach which focuses on the figure of the entrepreneurial individual is a behavioral approach. McClelland (1971), an exponent of this line of thought, states that business performance is due, in many cases, to the entrepreneurial individual and not to external factors. For the aforementioned author, entrepreneurs have: “the association between self-fulfillment and positive feelings; an education that encourages personal independence; the notion of reward for success; the will to pursue challenges” (Vale, 2014, p. 881). In this way, the economic driver of a society would arise from endogenous and individual aspects.

Schumpeter (1997) breaks with these ideas by defining the entrepreneur as the individual who promotes innovation. For the author, the entrepreneur plays a central role in capitalism by inducing changes and boosting the economy. Innovation, therefore, corresponds to “do new things or do things that were already being done in new ways” (Schumpeter, 2003, p. 412). For the author, the entrepreneur should be able to identify latent opportunities, notice risks, and implement socioeconomic changes by breaking existing structures (Vale, 2014).

In this scenario, theoretical approaches emerge in the field of entrepreneurship giving greater importance to organizations. In a pre-organizational point of view, as highlighted by Borges, Lima and Brito (2017), the entrepreneurial phenomenon can be understood through the emphasis on activities of agents inserted in the configuration of entrepreneurial processes. For Shane and Venkataraman (2000), in a seminal work about this topic, the entrepreneurial process refers mainly to understanding the steps that lead to the creation of a new venture. This conception focuses on the analysis of aspects ranging

from the emergence of ideas and motivations for opening a business, through the identification of opportunities and subsequent exploration of business opportunities. Thus, the apprehension of the entrepreneurial phenomenon as a process would consist in a search for understanding “how, by whom, and with what effects the opportunities to create products and services are discovered, evaluated and explored” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 218). Therefore, it is noticed that the entrepreneurial process emerges both from individual and contextual aspects, taking central the discussion about the relation between opportunities and entrepreneurial action (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Borges, Lima & Brito, 2017).

At the same time, from an organizational point of view, entrepreneurship has been analyzed from the perspective of building processes to create organizations and the manifestation of this phenomenon in the context of already established ventures (Gartner, 2012; Borges, Lima & Brito, 2017). Thus, it is observed that the focus of studies that explore procedural and organizational approaches resides in the relation among individuals, opportunities, organizations and the environment (Borges, Lima & Brito, 2017; Martens, Freitas & Boissin, 2010).

This perspective includes elements such as intrapreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001), the analysis of entrepreneurial organizations (Lampe, Kraft and Bausch, 2020), the analysis of strategic entrepreneurship (Mazzei, 2018), and the notion of entrepreneurial orientation (Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin & Frese, 2009; Wales, Gupta & Mousa, 2013; Silveira & Martins, 2016). Lumpkin and Dess (1996) distinguish the entrepreneurial orientation from the entrepreneurial process perspective by defining entrepreneurship as a “new entry”. For the authors, the term consists of accessing new or already consolidated markets with new or already established products and services, based on a strategic orientation of the organization with entrepreneurial conditions. According to Lumpkin and Dess (1996), the focus of entrepreneurship studies should be on describing how an organization’s entrance into markets is performed. For this, they emphasize the entrepreneurial orientation analysis.

Landstrom (2014) divides the history of the entrepreneurship study into three eras: economics, social science, and management. The author’s division was organized in a summary table with concepts about entrepreneurship over time (TABLE 1):

Table 1

Summary of the main approaches and concepts of entrepreneurship

Era	Author	Concept
Ancient Era (-1870)	Cantillon (1755)	The entrepreneur is a risk-taker. He acquires resources at a certain price and resells them at an uncertain price.
	Say (1816)	The entrepreneur uses the existing resources and scientific knowledge to create more profitable resources and products.
Economics Era (1870 - 1940)	Schumpeter (1934)	Entrepreneurship is to bring to the market something new and capable of changing the current order. Causing a “creative destruction”.
	Knight (1921)	The entrepreneur is a risk-taker, tries to predict changes in the economic scenario and faces the uncertainties of market dynamics.
	Kirzner (1973)	Entrepreneurship is defined as the “entrepreneurial alert”, that is, the constant ability of the entrepreneur to identify opportunities and make a profit by taking advantage of them.
Social Science/Psychology Era (1940 - 1970)	Baumol (1968)	The entrepreneur is an innovator (in the Schumpeterian conception) and even more. He is a leader and someone responsible to bring in new ideas.
	McClelland (1961)	Entrepreneurship comes from the entrepreneur’s personal characteristics such as aggressiveness, ability to take risks, motivation, organization, among others.
Management Era (1970 -)	Miller (1983)	The entrepreneurial organization is one that innovates, takes risks and is proactive in the market, seeking to be ahead of competitors.
	Drucker (1985)	“The Entrepreneur always looks for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity” (DRUCKER, 1985, p. 28).
	Gartner (1989)	Entrepreneurship is defined by the creation of organizations and the

Era	Author	Concept
		process by which they are created.
	Stevenson & Jarillo (1990)	Entrepreneurship is the process in which the individual seeks opportunities without considering his resources.
	Lumpkin & Dess (1996)	A new entry is the prime factor for entrepreneurship. The new entry can occur when there is the insertion in a new or already established market with new or existing products or services.
	Shane & Venkatamaram (2000)	The study field of entrepreneurship involves investigating the roots of opportunities; the process of discovering, exploring and evaluating opportunities; as well as the group of individuals who carry out these activities.
	Ireland, Hitt & Sirmon (2001)	Entrepreneurship is a social context-dependent process in which groups and individuals create wealth by using unique resource packages to exploit market opportunities.
	Anderson <i>et al.</i> (2015)	The organization must have an entrepreneurial nature in its internal decision-making process, its management philosophy and its strategic behaviors. The “entrepreneurial nature” refers to the ability to take risks, innovativeness and proactivity.

Source: Prepared by the author.

As it can be seen in Table 1, there was an important conceptual evolution, considering from the emergence of the first concepts of entrepreneurship to the most contemporary definitions. Despite the relevant studies of the first half of the 20th century, the theme actually became widespread in the academy after the 1970s, with the “Management Era”, as called by Landstrom (2014). It can be noticed that there are different points of view on the subject, with behavioral, sociological and economic approaches. As will be discussed in the next section, the concept of entrepreneurial orientation includes elements that emerged years ago and were developed over time, such as: Schumpeter’s innovation (1934); Kirzner’s “entrepreneurial alert” (1973), which resembles proactivity; and even Cantillon (1755) who brings the initial concept of risk-taking.

2.1 Entrepreneurial orientation

The concept of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is relevant in the scenario of research on entrepreneurship. Within the scope of scientific production on the subject, it shows that several studies point to a positive relation between a high level of EO and business performance (Miller, 1983; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005; Wang, 2008; Covin & Wales, 2019), which makes it interesting to address the topic in studies of Brazilian companies and organizations operating in markets that are not yet very explored, such as craft beers in Brazil.

Miller (1983) can be considered as the main precursor of the entrepreneurial orientation concept. Based on his work, the author developed an approach associated with the notion of entrepreneurial firms, which, in general, aimed to delimit the behavior that makes an organization entrepreneurial. Silveira and Martins (2016), Covin and Wales (2019) highlight that Miller (1983), while recognizing the importance of the entrepreneur, prioritizes the relevance of the organizational structure and the strategic behavior of the firm for business performance.

For Miller (1983), with the growth of organizations and the increase of markets' heterogeneity, successful firms would need a constant structural renovation, which requires capacity and action regarding innovation, the frequent search for the identification and use of opportunities, and an ability to take calculated risks. Therefore, the focus of studies in this area would be on the organizations and not on the entrepreneur, because "with the growth and complexity of organizations, there is a continuous need for organizational renewal, innovation, constructive risk-taking and the conceptualization and search for new opportunities that go beyond the efforts of a key manager" (Miller, 1983, p. 770). Furthermore, the emphasis should not be on who the people involved are, but on the entrepreneurship process and the business structures that prevent or foster it (Miller, 1983).

Although he does not explicitly use the term "entrepreneurial orientation", Miller (1983) defines an entrepreneurial company as one that engages in product development; is willing to take risks; and seeks to be a pioneer in the market, aiming to beat the competition. On the other hand, a non-entrepreneurial company would be little innovative, would be risk averse and would imitate the steps of competitors. As will be explained later, these basic principles advocated by Miller (1983) guide the concepts and theoretical categories associated with the entrepreneurial orientation approach, since its origin to its contemporary understanding (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Covin & Slevin, 1989; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005; Martens & Freitas, 2008; Martens *et al.* 2015; Covin & Wales, 2019; Lampe, Kraft & Bausch, 2020).

Miller (1983) highlights three dimensions of entrepreneurial companies, which would be behaviors that contemplate spheres of entrepreneurial orientation: risk-taking, innovativeness and proactivity. The author also emphasizes that there is a covariance and interdependence among these dimensions. It would not be enough to be innovative without the proactivity that allows for prospecting in the market and the introduction of a new product in a given segment. Furthermore, simple risk-taking

does not necessarily lead to an entrepreneurial attitude, especially in the absence of an innovation level and proactive behavior (Miller, 1983).

Covin and Slevin (1989) follow the same perspective as Miller (1983) and contribute to the concept of entrepreneurial orientation by stating that entrepreneurship is identified when organizations and their entrepreneurs are willing to take risks related to their businesses, to promote change and innovation in order to obtain competitive advantages and aggressively compete in the market, which would be an indicator of proactivity. For the authors, the opposite of an entrepreneurial action would be a passive or reactive posture, which would focus on the least possible technological innovation, with low propensity to take risks and caution in competitive engagement (Covin & Slevin, 1989, p. 70).

Rauch *et al.* (2009) define the entrepreneurial orientation as the representation of attitudes and policies that underlie business actions and decisions. Entrepreneurial orientation would be a process of formulating business strategy that entrepreneurs and/or managers use to achieve organizational purposes, sustain their visions and ensure competitive advantage. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) define entrepreneurial orientation as a range of practices, processes and strategic actions that lead to the exploitation or generation of new businesses. Thus, organizations act intentionally not only to seize opportunities, but also to create them.

Unlike Miller (1983), who sees entrepreneurship only in the concomitantly presence of the three dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, for Lumpkin and Dess (1996) this phenomenon is present when a firm enters a new or already consolidated market, introducing an original or existing product or service, which the authors call “new entry” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Therefore, the entrepreneurial orientation would be the concept used to describe how this “new entry” is performed.

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) make use of the three classic dimensions presented by Miller (1983) and add two more, creating a broader construct of categories linked to the notion of entrepreneurial orientation: autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. It is important to emphasize that, for the authors, the degree of influence of each category can vary according to the context in which a company is inserted, with external and environmental issues, with the organizational structure and even with the entrepreneurs’ characteristics (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 137). Thus, there would not necessarily be an interdependence among the dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, a decisive difference regarding the propositions from the original elaboration presented by Miller (1983).

Covin and Wales (2012), Martens *et al.* (2015) and Covin and Wales (2019) state that, although there are occasional conceptual variations, the meanings of Miller (1983) and Lumpkin and Dess (1996) have been prominent, being the basis for the foundation of most scientific research on the subject. Therefore, much of the debate on entrepreneurial orientation aims to discuss the concept and delimitation of the dimensions of EO, which influences the measurement of the studied phenomenon through quantitative modeling and approaches about the subject (Covin & Wales, 2012).

In addition, there is a debate about the unidimensionality and multidimensionality of entrepreneurial orientation (Martens *et al.*, 2015; Covin & Wales, 2019). Martens, Freitas and Boissin

(2010) carried out a survey about the dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation that are most used in the main articles on the subject. Although some authors add extra dimensions, such as Lumpkin and Dess (1996) and Melo and Leão (2005), the three categories explained by Miller (1983) – risk-taking, innovation and proactivity – are consensual and adopted by almost all perspectives and relevant works. Then, this paper carries out the analysis of the entrepreneurial orientation taking into account the three classic dimensions of Miller (1983).

Thus, it is necessary to deepen the study in the dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, as well as in their interactions. As mentioned earlier, since the work of Lumpkin and Dess (1996), part of the conceptual discussions about entrepreneurial orientation revolves around its dimensions and its delimitation while a behavior guided by multiple or single dimensions (Covin & Wales, 2019).

According to Covin and Wales (2012), the perspective conceived by Miller (1983) is not properly composed of three dimensions, but of three sub-dimensions – innovation, proactivity and risk-taking. There would also be a covariance or interdependence among the categories for the entrepreneurial orientation to be present. Thus, the author's approach must be considered as unidimensional, since the research that addresses such classification must concomitantly identify and treat the three (sub) dimensions. In other words, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial organizations only exist, according to Miller (1983), when the entrepreneurial orientation is present, being identified in the object of analysis with a unitary spectrum formed by the three proposed categories.

On the other hand, Covin and Wales (2012) point out that the conception of entrepreneurial orientation defended by Lumpkin and Dess (1996) deals with the dimensions as elements that can be independent and, together, they determine the apprehension of the conception, being this approach characterized as multidimensional. Covin and Wales (2012) emphasize that, in this perspective, the importance of each dimension will depend on the internal structure of the firm and the external context in which it is inserted. In this conception, entrepreneurship manifests itself with the emergence of a new entry. Entrepreneurial orientation would be the process by which dimensions (which may be independently present) contribute to entrepreneurial action.

Distinctions regarding the conceptions are fundamental to the study of entrepreneurial orientation, as unidimensional and multidimensional approaches can lead to different research types and results (Covin & Wales, 2012; Lomberg, Urbig, Stöckmann, Marino, Dickson, 2017; Covin; Wales, 2019). However, Covin and Wales (2019) argue that both approaches are defensible, and not mutually exclusive; in fact, they are focused on different issues: the unidimensional bias usually aims to “find what firms have in common; while the multidimensional view seeks to analyze the differences among companies” (Covin & Wales, 2019, p. 2). This way, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) perspective focuses on the domain, specifying where to look for entrepreneurial orientation, whereas Miller (1983) tries to identify what the firm's entrepreneurial orientation is (Covin & Wales, 2012).

In addition to the two dominant concepts, Covin and Wales (2019) point out, as an alternative, the study by Anderson *et al.* (2015) as a third way. Anderson *et al.* (2015) redefine entrepreneurial

orientation as a multidimensional concept composed of two distinct dimensions: entrepreneurial behavior and risk-oriented managerial attitude. The first dimension would be a junction between innovation and proactivity, which, according to the authors, are highly interrelated. The second dimension would be what is defined as risk-taking (Anderson *et al.*, 2015).

Lomberg *et al.* (2017) contribute to the debate about dimensionality by identifying shared effects of the dimensions on company performance. The authors argue that companies that make bilateral use of the categories can be successful, that is, the joint use of two from the three classic dimensions can provide positive results. Thus, despite the discussions about dimensionality, the different points of view explained in this paper are academically well accepted (Lomberg *et al.*, 2017; Covin; Wales, 2019).

Taking into account the paper objectives of understanding the entrepreneurial orientation of craft breweries located in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte through the presented theoretical framework, in this research, it will be adopted Miller's conception (1981), that is, unidimensional and with the three classic EO categories. This approach makes it possible to identify what entrepreneurial orientation is, recognizing the sub-dimensions and concomitantly treating them.

3 Research method

This article aims to understand the entrepreneurial orientation of craft breweries located in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. For this purpose, qualitative research was conducted with a case study. The qualitative method is the most appropriate way to answer the proposed question, since it will seek to understand a subject based on the use of primary data and with little attention to statistical representation (Gil, 2002).

Nordqvist and Zellweger (2014) point to the relevance of applying the qualitative method in analyzes that cover entrepreneurial orientation. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) reinforce the importance of exploring in great depth the characteristics and dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation in different types of organizations. According to Nordqvist and Zellweger (2014), it could be done through qualitative analyses. For the authors, the categories of entrepreneurial orientation may vary according to the history, culture and context in which a company is inserted, factors that could go unnoticed by quantitative research.

Based on the qualitative method, a multiple case study was carried out. For Stake (1978), case studies allow the investigation of particular issues about the studied object, and can serve as a basis for theoretical generalization when similarities with other cases are identified, leading to an expansion of the relevance of the study (Stake, 1978). As Eisenhardt (1989) points out, a case study can be used to provide a description of a studied phenomenon, test a theory or even generate a theory. So, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 25) state that case studies are "rich empirical descriptions of particular instances of a phenomenon that is typically based on a variety of sources".

Although multiple case studies imply a greater expenditure of time and resources compared to the single case study, Yin (2001) states that its results are more convincing and robust. For Eisenhardt (1989), multiple cases force investigators to go beyond initial impressions and analyze a greater diversity of data, which brings more reliability to the study. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) point out that a single case study can richly describe a phenomenon, however multiple cases provide a more solid analytical basis. Multiple case studies provide a greater variety of empirical evidence and, therefore, allow a greater number of comparisons and conclusions about the studied topic.

According to Eisenhardt (1989), a tactic that brings robustness to the case study is choosing two cases and pair them, analyzing the similarities and differences between them. For the author, the “juxtaposition of apparently similar cases carried out by a researcher in order to find differences can break simplistic approaches” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 541). Thus, in this study, it was decided to carry out the study of two craft breweries in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, and to analyze this pair in a juxtaposed way, finding common and different aspects around the categories of entrepreneurial orientation.

Nordqvist and Zellweger (2014) emphasize the relevance of the case study in research about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial orientation. This method allows, among other possibilities, to approach the study object in its complexity and dynamics, to gather information from various sources and over an extended period of time, which facilitates understanding complex social processes, highlighting the historical dimensions of the study object and, finally, to encourage the theoretical and conceptual development of scientific approaches.

Eisenhardt (1989) states that case studies are characterized by the collection of data from different sources, such as questionnaires, interviews and observations, being possible to triangulate collected data in different ways to give more robustness for the analysis (Bruning, Godri & Takahashi, 2018). Stake (1995) defines triangulation as the process of using multiple perceptions to bring greater understanding to the studied phenomenon. Denzin, Lincoln and Netz (2007) highlight triangulation as an instrument to ensure greater depth to the case study, which helps to legitimize the reality perceptions acquired during the investigation. In this paper, the techniques used for data collection were semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs from each company, document analysis and non-participant observation.

For Gaskell (2008), the objective of a qualitative interview is to understand the worldviews, values, principles, reasons of the interviewees, as well as their behavior in the contexts in which they are inserted. In this research, the purpose of carrying out the interviews was to capture in detail the aspects related to entrepreneurial orientation from the entrepreneurs' speeches. Thus, it was necessary to obtain in depth aspects such as the notions of prospecting and monitoring the market, willingness to take risks and the process of creation, development and innovation in new businesses and products.

Complementarily, documentary research was carried out in order to corroborate the data collected through the interviews. For Hodder (2000), documents can be used together with other

evidence for comparison and criticism of perceptions arising from other data sources. For this, articles from newspapers, magazines and institutional, social networks and institutional pages on the internet were retrieved, as well as any material provided such as folders, official documents, among others. This material was used in two moments. In the first one, it was used for an initial knowledge about the studied companies, which supported part of the semi-structured interviews. In a second moment, the collected materials were contrasted with excerpts extracted from the interviews for validation and completion of the performed content analysis.

To analyze the study object in a complementary way and from a different viewpoint, the non-participant observation technique was used, in order to deepen the understanding about the studied organizational and contextual environment, always with the authorization and monitoring of the entrepreneurs. As Adler and Adler (2000) emphasize, observation allows the analysis of aspects that are implied, and many times, may not be contemplated by other methods of data collection. The non-participant observation was carried out on the same day as the face-to-face interview in the production environment. In addition, there was an observation of the space, the blueprints of production, for a better understanding of the company's operation, the production process, and the innovation process. The impressions obtained through non-participant observation were recorded in a field notebook, with notes made from the researcher's immersion in the environment of the studied breweries.

For the observations, four visits were carried out from November to December 2020, with a duration of approximately one hour each. The main observed items were: characteristics of the production space, such as fermenters, cold chamber, place for inputs storing, spaces for the development of products and research, among others; automation level; offices; kitchen; company computerization; spaces for events, customer service, suppliers and other visitors; general observations about the staff and other observations considered relevant by the researchers.

Thus, it is important to highlight the criteria used to select the cases: 1) level of specificity of the case, considering its competitive relevance and innovation level in comparison to competitors at the national and regional scenario; 2) Chronological, contextual and marketing path of the company in the craft beer sector. Furthermore, it is important to point out the criteria used for not excluding an organization from this research: 1) having the company registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA), which prevents working with informal firms; 2) produce and sell craft beer in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Table 2 presents some of the characteristics of the studied cases, which will be more detailed in the section of discussion and analysis of results. Both present regional competitive relevance due to the production capacity. Company A also stands out for its pioneering in the sector, while company B stands out for the high level of automation on its production.

Table 2

Characteristics of Companies

Company	Foundation	Number of labels	Production Capacity (liters/month)	Relevance
A	2004	10	80,000	Pioneer in MRBH
B	2015	15	110,000	High level of automation

Source: Prepared by the author.

Regarding the choice of interviewees, five criteria were used: 1) Ownership of the craft brewery; 2) Being a shareholder in the enterprise; 3) Take charge of the beverage production; 4) Take charge of business management; 5) Operate in the business sphere in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Regarding the exclusion parameters of interviewees, this study considered: 1) For the entrepreneur, not having participated in the organization’s foundation process or not having a shareholding; 2) for the entrepreneur, not being present in the firm’s routine activities; 3) for managers, not being engaged in both the production and the sale of the product.

From an operational point of view, a total of four agents were interviewed, two from each of the studied craft breweries. This number of respondents was due to the identification of the main active participants in the management of companies, who represent strategic leadership, contributing to the entrepreneurial orientation of the business. The partners mainly provided crucial information about strategic elements and decision-making that are linked to proactivity and risk-taking. The brewmasters, on the other hand, were important for information regarding the product, the production process, and, consequently, elements related to innovation. Due to the confidentiality rules of scientific research, the names of the companies and the participants were omitted to guarantee the confidentiality of the information provided by them. The companies were named Company A and Company B, and Interviewees 1, 2, 3 and 4, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3

Companies and respondents surveyed

Company	Interviewee	Job Position	Education	Interview	Duration (minutes)	Date
Company A	Interviewee 1	Founder and President	Engineer	Face-to-face	62 min	Nov. 2020
	Interviewee 2	Production Manager/Brewmaster	Courses about beer production	Face-to-face	51 min	Dec. 2020
Company B	Interviewee 3	Partner/Commercial and Controllershship Director	Management	Face-to-face	51 min	Nov. 2020
	Interviewee 4	Founding Partner/Brewmaster	Engineer	Face-to-face	61 min	Nov. 2020

Source: Prepared by the author.

Gaskell (2008) recommends formulating a guide topic as a way of preparing for the interview. This resource can be used by the interviewer as a reminder of the topics to be addressed, in addition to allowing greater control of time during the activity. Thus, based on Nordqvist and Zellweger (2014) – who present a specific script for EO – a script was developed for the researcher's use in the data collection process. According to Triviños (1987), this type of interview brings the advantage of a broad understanding of the studied phenomenon. In order to carry out the research proposal, the interviewer formulates basic questions in his script so that the main themes are covered, but it is also possible to make new contestations as relevant issues to the work emerge. The interviews were recorded using an electronic audio device in order to preserve the integrity of collected data. Then, the interviewees' speeches were fully transcribed in an electronic text editor, to enable data treatment.

The set of collected empirical material was analyzed based on the content analysis technique, using the MAXQDA tool. According to Bardin (2011), the content analysis technique can be applied not only to various discourses, but also to all forms of communication. The investigator must identify and analyze patterns and structures contained in the collected messages. The objective of this analysis is to evaluate and make inferences about the content that was produced, assuming the elements of innovation, proactivity and risk considered as pre-established categories that will guide the use of the aforementioned analysis technique.

For Bardin (2011), the content analysis should be done in three steps. The first, pre-analysis, consists of organizing the initial ideas stipulated by the theoretical framework. In this phase, the first contact with the collected documents takes place. The material can be selected, organized and systematized. In the second stage, for Bardin (2011), the exploration of data actually takes place, which consists of defining rules for counting and categorizing information into themes or symbols. Finally, in the last stage, there is the results treatment, by using inference and interpretation, with the objective of apprehending the latent content present in all the material. At this point, it is important to carry out a comparative analysis regarding the categories stipulated in the study, taking into account the similar and different factors that were found.

Thus, in the content analysis, it sought to identify the construction of entrepreneurial orientation in each studied case. Based on the theoretical framework, four categories were explored from the collected data, related to the specific objectives of the paper: **Innovation, Risk-taking, Proactivity and Company History**. Hence, it was possible to design a framework to enable understanding the manifestation of entrepreneurial orientation in the studied craft breweries.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Description and historical context of the organizations participating in the research

In this session, the research results are presented and discussed. It is about understanding the entrepreneurial orientation of two craft breweries in the MRBH, in view of the dimensions of innovation,

proactivity and risk-taking. Furthermore, it is necessary to describe and historically contextualize the organizations participating in the research.

Company A is considered one of the pioneers in the craft beer market in Brazil. The brewery was founded in 2004, still at the beginning of the brewery's emergence in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Its history, however, begins sixteen years earlier, in 1988, when Interviewee 1 began to develop experiments as a “*paneleiro*”¹, that is, making beer for his own consumption as a hobby, which, according to him, cost half the price of industrial beers.

In 2001, on a visit to Germany, Interviewee 1 noticed the difference in the quality of the country's beers compared to the beers of large national companies. However, the entrepreneur noticed that the beers he made in pots were of similar quality. So, he decided to set up a craft brewery and industrialize its production.

In 2004, the entrepreneur finally founded Company A. Because it was a new market and still with few consumers, the organization adopted a strategy of disseminating the artisanal brewing culture in the region, which was very inspired by the movements that took place in the United States and Europe:

It was very interesting because we had seen in Europe, at the end of the 1980s, a movement that was called The Craft Beer Renaissance, the rebirth of craft beer. And in the 1990s, the microbrewery revolution movement, the microbrewery revolution took place. So, I saw that it was going to happen in Brazil, right; so, we managed to project a new market that didn't exist at the time, in fact we had three small breweries in Minas Gerais, which only made regular Pilsen beer (Interviewee 1).

Also aiming to promote the beer culture and, consequently, the market, Company A participated in 2005 in the re-founding of the Union of Beer and General Beverage Industries of Minas Gerais (SINDIBEBIDAS). In addition, in 2013, the company helped to create the Brazilian Association of Microbreweries (ABRACERVA), even helping to create regional centers.

In 2017, Interviewee 2, who had experience with homemade beer production, was working as a professor in the area and the purchase and sale of inputs for the sector. That year, he suggested a recipe to Company A. After this recipe won an important international award, in 2018, Interviewee 2 received the proposal to work as a brewmaster. Currently, he takes care of the entire production process and the purchases of the main inputs to be used in production.

After 16 years, Company A produces ten fixed beer labels, and also launches seasonal labels. The beer styles are distinct and differ from traditional craft breweries such as IPA, Pilsen, Weiss and Pale Ale. The company has a factory in a city in the MRBH, and one pub in the capital city of Minas Gerais. Initially, the first factory built had a production capacity of 10,000 liters per month. In 2015, new facilities were built, which currently have a large shed with 15 tanks of 4,000 liters, with a capacity to produce from 60,000 to 80,000 liters per month, and average production of 35,000 liters per month,

¹ “*Paneleiro*” is a slang, derivate from the word ‘*panela*’ (pan), used to describe the person who prepares homemade beer, in an informal way, using pans or other domestic utensils.

in 2020. In 2021, there was an intention to increase the number of products in line, as well as to double production.

The pub has a large space to receive customers for consumption on site and also offers direct sales. Both beer bottles and draft beer are sold, as well as growlers, which are large bottles for storing draft beer. There are also sales through delivery apps. In addition, the company's beers are found in the main supermarkets in the city. There is distribution to cities in the interior of Minas Gerais – with the intention of increasing sales to these locations – and also to some cities in other states.

Company B, in turn, was created by engineers who worked in large multinational industries and started brewing home beer as a hobby. In 2015, the entrepreneurs started doing market research and planning the venture. They prepared a business plan and managed to obtain financing from the BNDES. The factory, located in the municipality of Nova Lima, was designed and built to accommodate a production of up to 110,000 liters per month. When doing the initial market research, the entrepreneurs came to the conclusion that, initially, the factory should produce at least 30 thousand liters per month for an acceptable minimum profitability. The facilities were not purchased in advance. The founders bought vacant lots and built the factory based on the initial design. So, in 2016, the company was born with the aim of creating beers of high quality and low variability:

So, a whole modeling was done, a market study was done. We participated in some conferences, some fairs, to understand the size of the market; we did some research to understand if the market was mature or not, how it was growing, what were the future perspectives, so all this modeling was done in 2015. We didn't start anything without first studying the market, we studied a lot the market; when we realized that the market was attractive, we scaled the size, we purchased the house, we bought the land, we built the factory, the factory was designed specifically for this model, it was not adapted (Interviewee 4).

In 2018, Interviewee 4 became a partner in the company, and assumed controllership and commercial functions. There was a reformulation of the company's portfolio, and a segmentation adjustment: they went from nine labels to about fifteen and in different price segments. The more traditional Pilsen beer has the lowest price, and the dark Belgian style, from the company's own recipe, has the highest value.

Currently, Company B has a monthly production of 80 thousand liters per month, and intends to reach the maximum level of the factory capacity of 110 thousand liters per month in 2021. It offers beers in 500 or 600 milliliters bottles, which can be found in main markets in the region, in draft beer and long neck, which is rare for craft breweries in the region.

Following its initial project, the factory has a 100% automated production structure, being able to produce all customer demand with just five employees. As the structure was built with the objective of producing craft beers, the company presents an organized allocation of machinery and materials, so that the flow of people, materials and objects does not have any obstacles. In addition, Company B has a laboratory with two microbiologists for the analysis and quality control of beverages, and a large kitchen capable of making two thousand five hundred liters of beer at a time.

Finally, it is important to contextualize the moment when the interviews were carried out. The year 2020 has been extremely difficult for the sector (Amorim, 2020). In January, one of the main factories of the segment in the state was closed by the health authorities due to the presence of toxic substances in some of its beers. Nine people died and another 42 were intoxicated after consuming the product (Ricci, 2020).

In February, heavy rains ravaged the entire state, being the highest volume of rain ever recorded in the MRBH in 110 years. In Belo Horizonte, more than 2,500 commercial establishments suffered losses as a result of this fact (Quintella, 2020), which caused a decrease in beer consumption (Amorim, 2020).

Then, in March, the country was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, causing social isolation measures, with the closing of factories, pubs, restaurants, the restriction of agglomerations and the cancellation of shows and events. This resulted in a loss of 90% of the sector's revenue until April, and other losses during the pandemic emergency situation are still incalculable. In addition, some breweries have converted their manufacturing facilities to help fight the disease and produce 70% gel alcohol, which exterminates the virus (Amorim, 2020).

4.2 Entrepreneurial Orientation of Breweries of MRBH

The entrepreneurial orientation, as a delimited approach in the broader field of research on entrepreneurship, is configured from the behavior of the firm around categories such as proactivity, innovation, and the ability to take risks. Therefore, it becomes relevant to understand how the entrepreneurial orientation can be manifested in its different possibilities and combinations, in the context of companies inserted in specific sectors of the economy, such as the craft breweries, object of the present study.

The data collected from the two craft breweries organizations, which operate in the MRBH, revealed both similar and different postures about the entrepreneurial orientation. Based on the employed analysis techniques, it was possible to apprehend a set of evidence associated with the categories of proactivity, innovation, and ability to take risks, as shown in Table 4:

Table 4

Codification of entrepreneurial orientation categories

Company A			Company B		Total MRBH	
Code	Encoded segments	% of Encoded segments	Encoded segments	% of Encoded segments	Encoded segments	% of Encoded segments
Proactivity	56	59.6%	82	63.6%	138	61.9%
Innovation	28	29.8%	35	27.1%	63	28.3%
Risk-taking	10	10.6%	12	9.3%	22	9.9%
Total	94	100%	129	100%	223	100%

Source: Research data.

Table 4 reflects the encoding of the interview segments around the categories of entrepreneurial orientation, presenting both the number of encoded segments in absolute values and the percentage of each category compared to the total number of identified segments regarding the broader category of entrepreneurial orientation. This indicator is important, because it allows us to observe the relevance of a dimension of entrepreneurial orientation for the studied cases.

Therefore, regarding the content analysis of the interviews, it was possible to strongly identify elements that support the entrepreneurial orientation of these studied companies. A total of 231 segments were observed referring to the categories of proactivity, innovation and risk-taking, with the first being predominant with 61.9% of the encodings. The innovation category was present in 63 encodings, which corresponds to 28.3% of the encodes. Finally, there was a lower presence in the risk-taking category with only 9.9% of the codes.

The collected data indicated a strong tendency of companies to monitor the market, by opting for actions that bring them advantages in relation to competitors, pioneering in the offered products and services, and even seeking an intense engagement with government entities in order to achieve gains for the sector. Innovation also plays an important role in bringing differentiation and authenticity of companies in the business environment. Thus, for a better understanding of the entrepreneurial orientation in this study, it is important to qualitatively analyze the data found in each of the dimensions of the EO, a movement that will be explored below.

4.2.1 Risk-taking

The risk-taking dimension showed a smaller share of the collected segments. This result is due, in part, to the fact that the surveyed organizations, although they recognize the inherent risks of any enterprise, consider moderate the risk level of entering the sector. This can be explained by two main factors: the observed growth of the sector in the Brazilian craft beverage market, its growth potential;

and the existence of important barriers to new entrants in this market, because this industry requires not only specific knowledge, such as recipes and production techniques, but also a high initial investment:

So, I think it's a moderate to high risk, although it is. I think the industrial sector still has the advantage that the barrier to entry is higher than, for example, commerce, right? The guy sets up a store next to you and sells. But industry, no. You need to make investment, maturation time, these are things with a higher barrier to entry than other easier business that you can start (Interviewee 3).

Well... I don't know if it would be a high risk. I know that, because the market is very competitive and everyday more and more, you must be very prepared to enter this market. It's not enough just to have the knowledge of producing beer, you need business knowledge, you need to know everything, you need a well-formed team, you need general knowledge about the business, knowledge of logistics, production, everything that it involves; the commercial, sales, prices, accounting too. (...) There is room for growth. So, I cannot say that the risk is very high, because there is room for growth. At the same time, I cannot say risk is low because those who are unprepared are doomed to go bankrupt, to fail. (Interviewee 2).

Regarding the main obstacles and risks that are faced, the interviewees are unanimous in highlighting taxation, lack of incentives and high bureaucracy for the brewing industry. Taxation is not only high but quite complex. In addition, the lack of government incentives is seen as a factor that increases the risk of engagement in the craft brewing sector, and favoring the large beverage industries. Although, as we will see later when dealing with proactivity, there are advances in the relationship between companies and government spheres:

MAPA legislation was enacted in 1952 to favor Brahma and Antarctica breweries only. So, to get our first registered beers, we had to come up with a style name because they wouldn't accept that there was something different from strong or weak, light or dark beer; thus, when I arrived to register the *schwarzbier*, a roasted malt black beer, they said: 'this beer doesn't exist, you can't register it'. (Interviewee 1).

The tax issue is also a very big risk for craft breweries. Because our product is expensive, compared to Brahma, Skol. But it gets expensive, but mostly because of the tax. (...) I think that first, when we talk about taxation, I don't even mean that the rate is high or low, but it's the complexity of calculating that tax, it is worse than the rate you pay. It's the time you waste to come to the conclusion of how much you have to pay. This is very critical (Interviewee 3).

Another important risk highlighted is the input supply. Beer production requires a lot of perishable inputs and any delay in the supply chain can lead to the loss of an entire batch of the product. The small number of suppliers in the country can lead to a risk of shortages. Moreover, a quality beer requires very little variability in its flavor. In this way, the quality of the purchased inputs can not vary over time, which can be a problem in off-season or in technical problems that suppliers may face. Finally, there are the inherent logistical problems of the country, and the strong competition with the large breweries, which often makes it difficult to supply various products:

Another point that is also complex: we are an ant among elephants, right? Because the suppliers are multinational companies that hold oligopolies. For example, bottles: in Brazil, there are only three industries that make bottles, so there are three global suppliers. I sell in an extremely concentrated national market and both try to 'squeeze' me all the time. So, I think that's the main thing about breweries. Malt suppliers are few, bottle suppliers are few, the biggest breweries in the world are here in Brazil (Interviewee 3).

Look, (the first risk) was the absence of suppliers, I remember we had to explore, begging the agrarian cooperative, which is our malt and hop supplier, to sell us 5 tons of malt. 'It does not exist. We sell 50 million tons at least'. So that was a risk. First, get depleted. (Interviewee 1).

A risk that is inherent to every business is the imponderability. In 2020 and 2021, companies faced many difficulties due to the pandemic scenario, with commerce closing, a ban on events, and the sudden drop in profits. This uncertain scenario has led the sector organizations to take risks and seek creative solutions. Company A had to remodel its product distribution system by closing several points of sale. Company B, on the other hand, took a risk by investing a large amount for the exit from the economic crisis.

Imagine the sector where my brewery, for example, had 150 points of sale, all of them were closed; it means a loss of revenue of 90%, right? We fortunately survived because of delivery, in which we managed to integrate and deliver beers throughout Belo Horizonte, and even to other states. It was very important, because due to delivery we were able to pay the payroll (Interviewee 1).

I think, for example, we had a great year when talking about taking risks in adverse conditions. But we take a risk, we don't do anything crazy, but taking a risk. For example, in March, Belo Horizonte got completely closed, right? What did we do? We produced what we could to keep storage, we mobilized a lot of money, we produced everything we could, we filled all the tanks, we gave vacations to those who could, we did it all, we took the risk of keeping our storage. We bought everything we could from raw materials, all bottles we could, so we 'wouldn't be caught red-handed'. (Interviewee 3).

Finally, it is important to mention market risks. Since it was a market still in consolidation, companies faced challenges due to the lack of knowledge of the beer consumer and the market itself. Company A, being older, operated in a scenario where there were few craft beer consumers, few competitors and lack of information, which made planning and establishment of forecasts more difficult, leading to greater risk. Another problem addressed about the marketing topic is competition with large breweries, which offer lower prices, use predatory practices, and make it difficult to acquire inputs.

I think the biggest risk for breweries as a whole... first, it is an extremely concentrated market. We are in the backyard of AmBev, which is the largest brewery in the world. Then you have Ambev, Heineken, Itaipava dominating 90 or more percent of the market, so it's a risk, which always need to be analyzed (Interviewee 3). Look, the sector at the time was very incipient, right? We were very brave, but we did an analysis based on the benchmarking of the Craft Beer renaissance and the microbrewery revolution, Europe and the United States. We only had assumptions, and when you tried to get close to an existing brewery, do you know what would happen? The staff didn't even answer you; they hid their faces. It was the opposite of what I did. So, our risk analysis was very precarious, but we did it (Interviewee 1).

As seen throughout this section, the risk-taking ability dimension was present at different moments in the trajectory of the studied organizations, which developed a strategy to face adverse situations. Company B, for example, invested a large amount in preparing for the exit from the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, as well as tried to reduce the risks of shortages by innovating through the development of its own yeast. Company A, in turn, adopted proactive strategies to remodel its distribution channels, increasing sales, and to obtain more favorable tax regimes from the government, reducing financial risks. Thus, as will be seen in the following sections, innovation and proactivity can be elements of coping with the risks associated with these studied businesses.

4.2.2 Innovation

The craft brewery sector presents a great variability of products. Two beers of the same style, but made by different breweries, can have completely different tastes and qualities. Barley beverages are very sensitive to any changes, whether in inputs, production processes, storage techniques, among others. Besides, there is the possibility of production with a variety of equipment, from homemade pans to automated tanks, which guarantees a high level of product innovation for the sector.

For the investigated organizations, product innovation is important, as it guarantees the authenticity of the company and helps to win customers. However, it is not necessarily considered the most important factor. It helps to explain the predominant presence of the proactivity dimension (61.9%) and the lower participation of the innovation dimension (28.3%) in the collected data.

Due to the high competition and volatility of the craft beer sector in the MRBH, the companies in this study also consider the low variability of product quality as a fundamental factor to ensure customer loyalty. Furthermore, as can be seen below, there is a focus on innovation in production processes – and not only on creating new products – as a way of ensuring quality stability and reducing costs, as well as marketing innovations, to bring the product closer to customers, especially during the pandemic period.

I think it is a balance between maintaining quality, recognition of maintaining quality; when we talk about recognition, we are looking for awards, to be recognized not only by the customer, but also by the judges, right? So, in serious events, we seek recognition in these events. And maintaining that quality. So, for us it is a strong pillar, and innovation goes hand in hand. But we don't separate one from each other. (Interviewee 4). (Innovation) is not the most important aspect, it is important, but you must focus on quality, on the solidity of your company and your beer. It does not matter if I launch a new beer every day, if the line beers I have, they are never the same (quality). It's not because it's a craft brewery that it can't have repeatability of the product; it can and it should have line products, ok. I must have consistency about my product. So, release is one of the aspects of the company. I have to launch (products) because I need to generate content, I need to make 'noise', I must attract new customers and show the market that I am active. At the same time, I need consistency and solidity of products so that my loyal customer does not get disappointed with me and say: 'this factory cannot keep the quality of products'. Thus, innovation is an important process, but not the only one. (Interviewee 2).

About innovation, both organizations already have a large portfolio of line products, 10 from Company A and 15 from Company B, with a large number of loyal customers; in consequence, the interviewees state that there is no need to launch new products too often.

Well... It is a company with a very large product portfolio; few factories of this size manage to keep a product portfolio. We do it very well. This way I can reach from a large clientele to a Beer geek, that is, the guy who loves beer and is passionate and wants to drink a more complex beer (Interviewee 2). We have breweries that only survive on innovation. So, they start the year with a product line and end the year with a different line that has nothing to do with the one at the beginning, so it is a process to be always releasing new products, right? But it's a strategy, not the [Company B] strategy. Our strategy is to introduce new products every year, we have releases, but also the maintenance of quality and the search for quality recognition (Interviewee 4).

The market is constantly monitored, regarding the timing of launching new beers on the market and the choice of which product to launch. Innovation, therefore, is intrinsically linked to proactivity.

The creation of new products would be a search instrument for being pioneer in the market and for obtaining comparative gains about competitors:

The ideas come from market trends, you know, the market dictates some trends, so we start to absorb types of products, the company's own research. We do follow-up, a lot of research to know what the market is looking for, what the market is giving value, often the market itself doesn't know, but we understand this market. (Interviewee 4).

The recipes' idea comes mainly from market monitoring. I like to be up to date with everything that is released. In BH, in Minas Gerais, in Brazil and in the world. I follow many breweries around the world, and what they are doing, what they are using, what types of beers they are producing, to get a sense about the market. So, having the general perception of the market makes me have an idea of what I'm going to produce and what I'm not going to produce. One question always comes up: who are we going to sell to? This beer is intended for which customer? There is a clientele for this more intense, more aromatic, stronger beer, and there is a clientele for this lighter, refreshing, everyday beer. It is all market knowledge. (Interviewee 2).

In addition to product innovation, companies also seek to innovate in their distribution, points of sale and logistics. Both breweries invest in delivery applications as a way to get closer to end customers. The documentary research showed that the investigated companies are basically the only ones to participate in these applications.

Company B, based in Nova Lima, has developed two storage centers in Belo Horizonte, which allow quick delivery to customers in all parts of the city. Company A, besides operating in the main delivery applications, also developed its own application, with lower prices, and with fast delivery in the city of Belo Horizonte. A second application was developed to bring the company closer to clients that are legal entities, such as pubs, restaurants and supermarkets. For corporate customers, Company B makes use of its website. Another innovation by company A was the development of vending machines, which are machines that provide draft beer, spread across different high-income condominiums in the MRBH.

As mentioned before, another important point for the companies is the innovation of process, which can bring greater quality to products, cost reduction and scale gains. Company A is developing the automation of its production process and is already able to remotely control part of the production, as well as solve eventual problems remotely and with greater agility:

We have automation, not 100% automation, but we have automation in production, in the kitchen, we have automation in the tanks, that is, inside my house I can see the temperature of the tanks, I can check, change, turn on and close valves remotely. (Interviewee 2).

Company B stands out in this aspect. The process is almost completely automated: there was the development and adaptation of the machinery acquired together with the supplier, to ensure greater efficiency in the production process. Moreover, the organization has its own laboratory system for chemical and control analysis, which guarantees cost reduction and agility in the results; the organization also develops its own yeasts, which guarantees the stability of the products flavor and also reduces the production costs:

We noticed that machines available on the market worked with efficiency between 75% and 80%, and machines outside Brazil work at 95% to 98%. Then, we managed to work so that the suppliers or the main supplier, the one that supplied most of the equipment, opened up the engineering for us to redesign the machines, redesign the controls, so [Company B] was at that time extremely innovative as a blueprint designed for this. And even today, after 5 years from the project, 4 years being operational, it is still innovative. It is due to the work that started there. So today, when you look for process efficiency, this is what the company invested most in the beginning. Today we work with 93% to 95% of efficiency (Interviewee 4).

So, we were born with Laboratory; there are two microbiologists inside the laboratories of Company B. We always have a physical-chemical analyst as well. So, the yeast part, the cultures are in-house, the generational controls are in-house, all the evaluation processes of *cip* lines (cleaning in place), tank *cip*, final product contamination, product life-time (Interviewee 4).

As Lumpkin and Dess (1996) state, innovation can be seen in the investigated companies in the ability to launch new products or implement new ideas. The craft beer sector has a relatively high level of innovativeness, as each label generally reflects a unique recipe and depends on different variables for the creation of its flavor. Both analyzed companies produce unique products and present innovation in this item. However, as they already have a consolidated portfolio, the main focus of the new ideas lies in the development of innovations of the process, mainly in production activities for Company B, and in marketing processes for Company A. Furthermore, as will be addressed in the next section, due to the competitive market in the MRBH, there is a concentration of activities related to proactivity, which means that innovation is observed in only 28.3% of the segments analyzed in this work.

4.2.3 Proactivity

Regarding proactivity aspects, the investigated companies point to a relative optimism about the market, despite the crisis contexts (which include the COVID-19 pandemic). They believe that there is a lot of room for growth in the sector, with an increase of up to five times its current size. In this way, companies keep constant monitoring of the market and aim to take actions that bring them the leading role in their competitive performance:

Well, today the main challenges I see, in our situation, is that the market still has room for growth of craft breweries. Today we occupy a very small part of the beer consumption market in Brazil, so in the last 10, 15, 20 years, there has been a huge increase in market gains. So, we anticipate a big increase in the next few years. (Interviewee 2).

The market numbers are very consistent, both in terms of growth and potential to grow. For example, here in Brazil we estimate that the craft market corresponds from 1% to 2% of the beer market as a whole. In the US, it is more than 20%. Of course, there are differences of sales, culture, tax, market, but it is a market that will grow five times in a quite short time horizon. (Interviewee 3).

One aspect that stands out concerns the competitiveness of the sector. The investigated companies are unanimous in stating that the environment is much more competitive than cooperative. There is a level of cooperation, but, according to the interviewees, competition is predominant in the sector.

There is a perception that giant breweries such as Ambev and Heineken are competitors, however, the main competition is among the craft breweries themselves. The main points they

highlighted are the price war in the markets, which is often carried out by companies that evade taxes, or that use lower quality inputs and that are not within the spectrum of a craft beer:

My main competitors are the big breweries that try to make cheap products, using non-noble ingredients... and that still conquer the lay customer. These are our competitors, I think the sister breweries that are in the sector don't agree, and those that practice tax evasion, these are the competitors. (Interviewee 1).

I tell you that the biggest competitor in the craft market are the craft breweries themselves, it's not the mainstream market. So today, the craft breweries fight among themselves for a market of only 2%. If they all worked seriously, we would be much bigger, but today we realize that it does not happen, it is still immature, the market is still very immature. It will take a few more years for it to mature. (Interviewee 4).

Faced with this competitive scenario, the reaction of companies is not to enter the competition for prices. The main focus is on the quality and consistency of the product, which justifies, as we saw earlier on innovation, the investment not only in new products, but in more advanced production processes that guarantee gains of scale, cost reduction, and low variability of quality:

During the pandemic, we did some good things, because the day-to-day hustle has decreased a lot, so we did surveys, talked to our customers, ran *nps* (net promoter score); What did we notice? Mostly, there was a question in the survey that was: what's the first word that comes to your mind when you look at the company? The first prevalent (answer) was quality. (Interviewee 3).

I have to launch (products) because I need to generate content, I need to make 'noise', I must attract new customers and show the market that I am active. At the same time, I need consistency and solidity of products so that my loyal customer does not get disappointed with me and say: 'this factory cannot keep the quality of products'. (Interviewee 2).

In addition, the studied organizations remain attentive to the market. One of the main recent changes identified by the sector is the increase in the consumption of the product in bottles and cans. Belo Horizonte has a tradition of high consumption of draft beer; however, this product requires immediate consumption. With the pandemic and the impossibility of agglomerations, and, consequently, the impossibility of consuming the product *in loco*, the offer of beers in more suitable containers increases durability, allows greater capillarity and allows the expansion of business to other regions, since the increase in sales to other locations outside the MRBH is in the plans of both companies.

We are working mainly with the expansion of packages, bottles, cans, etc. Because we can have access to a wider clientele. So, entering supermarket chains allows me access to the interior of Minas Gerais, entering through delivery, entering the homes of people who would not buy in supermarkets. (Interviewee 2)

Now there have been some changes in the market that were quite significant. Going back to the business plan I mentioned, for example, in the business plan it was estimated that we would have a relatively higher percentage of bottles than we have today compared to draft beer. But the market has changed a lot, especially here in BH, beer is a cooler drink in most cases. And here in BH you have this culture of neighborhood growlerias (growlers' sellers), of the small stores that sell beer in the 'pet' (plastic bottles), in that one or two liter 'pet'. Something that in São Paulo, for example, there isn't. (Interviewee 3).

As highlighted in the theoretical framework of this paper, proactivity can be defined as the company's propensity to anticipate events, monitoring markets and competitors, posture of being ahead in the market by launching new products and services, in order to achieve competitive advantages (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Martens & Freitas, 2008). In this way, we consider some attitudes towards government spheres as proactive actions, since they can have a direct impact on the market, reduce costs,

bring greater predictability and, mainly, reduce the competitive difference regarding large companies in the national brewing sector.

From the action of companies and their associations, it was possible, at the municipal level, to change the zoning law of cities, allowing the construction of breweries in central areas, no longer being necessary to headquarter companies in isolated regions. At the state level, it was possible to achieve a reduction in ICMS taxes, as well as the institution of the local productive arrangement. At the federal level, in 2018, craft breweries were included in the 'Simples Nacional' regime, which resulted in a large reduction in bureaucracy for companies. Company A, mainly, stood out in these actions, by actively promoting the creation of associations that claimed these achievements together with the governmental spheres, even, with members of the company acting strongly in the labor unions:

The State also supported us after this insistent work of proving that we were not big breweries. Large breweries represent 9% of the state's ICMS tax collection. So why would they help us, if we don't even represent 1%? So, after several meetings, we proved that if they encouraged it, we would become a very important contributor. So, a special tax regime, called RET, was created, in which our taxation, just to have an idea, dropped from 23% to 8% of ICMS. (...) The city council approved the Belo Horizonte zoning law, allowing the approval of Beer Pubs on any street in Belo Horizonte, because they considered that breweries were industry, so it could only be in an industrial region. And Belo Horizonte is the world capital of pubs, it was relegated to the background (Interviewee 1).

Despite several criticisms of government bureaucracy, there is an understanding by those interviewed that the Ministry of Agriculture is currently doing a good job. They also point out that after actions by the beverage associations, MAPA sought to help the brewing sector by adopting specific measures that benefited the sector, for example, it was possible to facilitate the registration of labels on the entity:

MAPA is a technical entity, so (...) what it needs to do, it does very well, which is to rule, regulate and inspect the market about technical aspects. It does this well, so it is egalitarian for everyone and provides excellent service. I think that at this point there is nothing to complain about MAPA. (Interviewee 4).

Finally, it is worth noting that, although the investigated companies seek to be a pioneer in the market with the quality of their products, the posture of formulating new products is more reactive, based and inspired by the constant observation of the domestic market, and, mainly, by monitoring foreign markets such as North America and Europe, aiming to anticipate market trends for Brazil:

We are very attentive to the foreign market. Brazil, 10 years ago, Brazil was a reflection of the American market of 5 years before. Today Brazil is a reflection of the American market with a gap of one or two years. Thus, what starts to happen with the American market, with a delay of no more than 2 years, it arrives in Brazil. So, we are very attentive to what happens outside. The American market is a reference market today. (Interviewee 4).

Since the end of 2018, I have been working at [Company A], and I had a market vision that the most current, more modern beers were gaining a lot of space in the Brazilian market. American-style beers, which are more 'hoppy', more alcoholic, more bitter, more aromatic, are gaining more space in the Brazilian market and I already noticed this since my trip to Europe. (Interviewee 2).

Hence, as demonstrated in the theoretical framework of this article, proactivity corresponds to the search for taking advantage of opportunities, through constant market monitoring, pioneering when

introducing new products and services, among other factors (Martens & Freitas, 2008). Regarding the market monitoring factor, both companies identified strong competition not only from large breweries, but also from organizations in the craft segment itself. In addition, there is an expectation of growth in the sector and the inclusion of new competitors in the business environment. Thus, from the perspective of entrepreneurial orientation, it leads to an intensification of proactive practices to the detriment of innovation and risk-taking as a response mechanism to the dynamics of the external environment, which is considerably reflected in the greater observation of proactivity during the content analysis that was performed.

5 Final considerations

The objective of this article was to understand the entrepreneurial orientation of craft breweries located in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. Specifically, we sought, at first, to characterize the historical trajectory of foundation and development of the studied craft breweries and, later, to identify the creation of entrepreneurial orientation in each case, taking into account the theoretical categories that are relevant to the approach.

As seen above, it was pertinent to use the dimensions recommended in the theoretical framework of entrepreneurial orientation to analyze the craft brewery market, since this sector has shown rapid growth in the last two decades and has the potential to triple in size in the future (ABRACERVA, 2020; MAPA, 2020). Therefore, it was possible to verify that the configuration of the entrepreneurial orientation occurred, in the scope of the studied companies, in a more similar than distinct way. In other words, the strategic directions of the breweries, as well as their behavior in terms of proactivity, the risk-taking ability, and the ability to build innovations, led to the creation, development and consolidation of the studied craft breweries in the market, with the entrepreneurial orientation as an essential link for the foundation of their practices.

Another aspect that deserves to be highlighted, in this scenario, refers to the level of this orientation and how it is internally configured. The content analysis revealed that the composition of the EO dimensions was similar in the two studied breweries, with a predominance of proactivity, followed by a relevant observation of innovation, and the lower presence of risk-taking. These data reveal that, even though it is a unidimensional category, entrepreneurial orientation can be composed of different combinations among dimensions, being these combinations essential to determine the EO level of organizations, which certainly influences their performance from a wider perspective.

Specifically, it was observed that the risk-taking ability was similar in both cases, and that the market risks faced are associated with the potential shortage of inputs, high bureaucracy and taxation, the exploration of a new market, with relatively few customers, and imponderable risks, such as the pandemic.

Regarding innovation, there was a focus, to a lesser extent, on the development of new products, and to a greater extent on the development of process innovations. Company B also demonstrated great ability to innovate in production processes, with the development of its own machinery and inputs, in addition to high automation. Company A, in turn, seeks to innovate in its sales system, with the development of applications, vending machines and the opening of a pub in Belo Horizonte.

Finally, with regard to proactivity, the most observed dimension in the study, it was noted that in both cases there is a portfolio of products already established by the organizations. Hence, there was a lower tendency to innovate in the product, but a greater possibility of adopting more proactive postures to seek prominence in the market. In fact, the competitiveness of the local sector, with the presence of several competitors, in addition to the performance of large traditional breweries, forces the investigated companies to engage in greater market monitoring practices, and in the search for being pioneer and for differentiation. Thus, Company A adopts a posture of promoting the craft brewing culture through events, besides a high level of engagement with labor unions and the search for relationships with government spheres. Company B, on the other hand, aims, in large part, to obtain quality gains from its innovations in the production process, which allows it to stand out from the competition in terms of price and quality.

Therefore, considering the investigated cases, the configuration of the entrepreneurial orientation was influenced by the configuration of the local market itself, and delimited by a greater prevalence and proximity between the dimensions of proactivity and innovation. With this, it was possible to apprehend, albeit in a limited way to these cases, some particularities of the entrepreneurial orientation in the analyzed context, which constituted a gathering of important evidences that allow deepening the understanding about the constitution of the dimensions of the entrepreneurial orientation in the analysis scope of the MRBH craft beer market.

Consequently, this paper has as a limitation the restricted number of studied companies, which does not allow a generalization of the analyzes made from the studied region. In this sense, there is room for additional studies that explore the EO of craft breweries, in general, and that explore differences and similarities about the EO in different broader territorial contexts, contemplating the state and national levels.

It is also suggested the use of other methodological strategies for the same study object and a similar theoretical framework, such as quantitative surveys (which are frequent in EO studies), to enable a greater reach of the results and a greater scope of breweries from a regional point of view, adding more and deeper evidences regarding the particularities of the entrepreneurial orientation and the structuring of its dimensions in organizations from the aforementioned segment.

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