Thursday 13 July
12noon – 1pm, Room CO23

PhD candidate Ruth Mrabure

Ruth will be presenting her thesis on indigenous entrepreneurial orientation.

INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION: Exploring Entrepreneurial Orientation with Māori Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) refers to policies and business practices that are entrepreneurial and reflected through five dimensions: innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness, autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. While there have been many existing studies that have researched EO, most do not recognise contextual differences that may exist. Thus, in an indigenous context, EO is yet to be adequately studied, and therefore I focused on exploring entrepreneurial orientation from an indigenous Māori perspective. To understand EO from an indigenous perspective, there is need to recognise the contextual factors that could influence the mental modes and behaviour of indigenous entrepreneurs. The existing theories within EO suggest that EO is a disposition and behaviour, but I combined both views in developing a model for exploring EO in an indigenous context. The antecedents that influence EO was developed from existing indigenous entrepreneurship literature on socio-cultural, political, economic and environmental factors that influence indigenous entrepreneurs and their business practices. Two main antecedents made up of seven factors were identified as influencing indigenous entrepreneur’s perception of EO - their specific worldview, and the entrepreneurial ecosystem within which they operate. The notion of worldview encapsulates indigenous views of existence, self-determination, social network, and the environment. The entrepreneurial ecosystem includes influencing factors from government policies, economic and market opportunities.

The findings showed that indigenous worldview had a strong influence on all five dimensions of EO because Māori entrepreneurs draw meaning from their worldview and local entrepreneurial ecosystem. A key contribution of this thesis is the identification of Indigenous Entrepreneurial Orientation (InEO). InEO reflects indigenous entrepreneur’s disposition and behaviour of EO, and this is evident in their business practices, leading to three InEO typologies. The first typology is a kaupapa Māori entrepreneurial orientation that integrates cultural values into business practices. The second typology is a Western entrepreneurial orientation that reflects largely Western business practices. The third typology is a hybrid entrepreneurial orientation that combines cultural values and Western business values. InEO indicates that an indigenous view of EO exists and as more researchers adopt cross context approaches to research, the discourse on the lack of compatibility between some indigenous cultural values and aspects of entrepreneurship can be demystified.