XXII SEMEAD
Seminários em Administração

novembro de 2019
ISSN 2177-3866

Antecedents of Absorptive Capacity: analysis of alliances on Brazilian ITC companies

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Agradecimento à orgão de fomento:
The authors would like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) in the undertaking of this rese

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Introdução

Innovation performance is related to external knowledge resources but empirical studies are not conclusive about this (Capaldo; Petruzzelli, 2015). As a dynamic capability (DC), Absorptive Capacity (ACAP) may be a facilitator mechanism for success of alliance innovation, which depends on the companies' ability to deal with the dynamically combination of internal and external resources to improve performance. Differences in alliances features, including partner's country of origin, type of partner such as academic and commercial, and R&D structure may be differently related to innovation

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

As DC, ACAP may be a moderator factor between alliance and performance (Lucena and Roper, 2016), but impacts of distinct antecedents on DC remains misunderstood, being interorganizational structure (as alliance) one of these (Schilke et al., 2018). Moreover it is missing studies on the impacts of different type of partners on ACAP. Do alliances contribute to the development of ACAP of ICT companies? (If so) What types of alliances (and in what conditions) have the greatest impact on ACAP? Which are the impacts of type of alliances on each component of ACAP (potential-PACAP and realized-RACAP)?

Fundamentação Teórica

Used literature support that (i) alliances for innovation are positively related to the development of the potential and realized ACAP (Murovec, Prodan, 2009); (ii) relation between alliances for innovation and the development of ACAP is moderated by the location of partners (Gertler, 2003; Hansen, 2015); Capaldo,Petruzzelli, 2015); (iii) academic alliances for innovation are positively related to the development of the PACAP (George et al., 2002; Hagedoorn et al., 2017); (iv) commercial alliances for innovation are positively related to the development of the RACAP (Nieto, Santamaría, 2007).

Metodologia

We used data from PINTEC/IBGE (the Brazilian survey of innovation). The database, which was conducted in 2011, contains data at the company level (microdata) in the ICT industry. The relative impact of commercial and academic alliances in higher development of potential and realized capabilities was estimated using a multivariate logistic model for the final sample of 274 observations. The method used is the maximum likelihood resulting in estimated parameters that are consistent and asymptotically efficient for the sample size.

Análise dos Resultados

The results show the impact of both commercial and academic alliances on ACAP, but differently for PACAP and RACAP. Also, this relation is moderated by some characteristics of companies and of alliances, such as foreign partners, existence of a R&D department, qualified R&D people, and company size. Regarding to alliances abroad, they have positive impact only for commercial partners in the PACAP, revealing that foreign commercial alliances enable knowledge acquisition and assimilation capabilities, but do not lead to knowledge transformation and exploitation

Conclusão

Characteristics of alliances and of companies in the sample moderate the relation between alliance and ACAP. Some of them corroborate the literature (e.g. commercial and academic alliances impact more on PACAP than on RACAP). Others bring a fresh discussion to shed light on the main questions of this paper (foreign commercial alliances positively impact on PACAP, but the results do not show impact on RACAP; existence of R&D relates positively to development of RACAP but it is not true for PACAP, while qualified R&D positively impact on the development of PACAP, but impact negatively on RACAP

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