

BEYOND GROWTH: how scaling cleantech firms drives circular economy

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Introdução

The challenge of business growth and cost minimization has been a driver for gaining competitiveness in the digital and strategic context of business routines (Adner, Puranam, & Zhu, 2019). Scaling markets in the digital age has pushed companies to constantly adapt to changes in industry and technology to meet new market demands, political debates, and research agendas related to the environment and society.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

this research poses the following research question: "How do scaling activities foster the development of circular economy business models in the context of cleantechs?".

Fundamentação Teórica

Scale-ups, or scaling firms, are high-growth companies that increase their operation by drawing on and adding to digital infrastructures (Huang, Henfridsson, Liu, & Newell, 2017), which can scale their business at an impressive pace compared to product-based ventures (Piaskowska, Tippmann, & Monaghan, 2021). Scaling companies have digital and technology-based business models and are going through organizational cycles quickly, reducing their costs proportionally to their growth (Piaskowska et al., 2021; Reuber, Tippmann, & Monaghan, 2021; Mihailova, 2021).

Metodologia

We used a deductive-inductive, in-depth case study method (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Grabner, 2007), appropriate for the strategic nature of firm's scalability, highly confidential information, and the process-focused "how" questions of our research. The method also allows for exploring subjective aspects and individual perspectives (Yin, 1994) in the cleantech sector. The strategy-process research provided the background to capture the scalability process and its relationship with the circular economy.

Análise dos Resultados

Our findings show abductive and inductive categories (Grodal et al., 2021). We first introduce the abductive categories (from the literature) that interviewees highlighted — scalability activities — and explain why scalability activities enable cleantech firms to develop CE business models. We then discuss the inductive category - digital capabilities of studied cleantech firms. At the end of the results section, we present a tentative conceptual model to answer the question: "How do scaling activities foster the development of circular economy business models?"

Conclusão

The findings resulted in a tentative conceptual model based on three propositions that assert how digital competencies, inherent in born-digital companies, facilitate and accelerate scaling activities crucial to Circular Economy Business Models. These scaling activities include Acquisition, Financing, Innovation, and Digitalization, which not only reduce costs but also enhance the expansion and effectiveness of these models.

Referências Bibliográficas

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Management Journal, 44(6), 1391-1424. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3365>