

EVOLVING STARTUP PERFORMANCE: TEMPORAL DYNAMICS AND STRATEGIC ADAPTATION FRAMEWORK

LUIZ GUILHERME RODRIGUES ANTUNES
UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE ITAJUBÁ - UNIFEI (UNIFEI)

RAFAEL FREITAS SOUZA
FACULDADE DE ECONOMIA, ADMINISTRAÇÃO E CONTABILIDADE DE RIBEIRÃO PRETO - FEARP/USP

BRENO NUNES
ASTON UNIVERSITY

HAMILTON LUIZ CORREA
FACULDADE DE ECONOMIA, ADMINISTRAÇÃO E CONTABILIDADE DA UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO - FEA

RICARDO VINÍCIUS DIAS JORDÃO
SWISS MANAGEMENT CENTER

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Introdução

Startups operate in highly uncertain environments and require performance management systems that reflect their dynamic and temporal nature. However, traditional models remain static, overlooking the evolutionary milestones that shape organisational performance. This study proposes a processual and adaptive model to understand the evolution of performance management in Brazilian startups.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

How do performance management systems evolve in startups? The objective is to analyse the temporal milestones that influence this evolution, modelling the transformations in performance assessment practices as startups mature in uncertain environments.

Fundamentação Teórica

Traditional literature addresses performance based on static causal variables. This study adopts a processual and multidimensional approach (Van de Ven & Poole, 2005), integrating dynamic capabilities theory (Teece et al., 1997) and strategic adaptability to understand how startups shape their performance systems throughout their developmental trajectory.

Metodologia

A mixed-method case study involved interviews with unicorn founders and a forum with scaleups and deep techs in Brazil. Qualitative (Gioia) and quantitative analyses (regressions, t-tests, and Monte Carlo simulations) were applied to identify temporal milestones and their relationships with transformations in performance systems.

Análise dos Resultados

Six evolutionary phases of performance systems were identified: accelerated growth, initial refinement, transformative peak, continuous growth, residual disruption, and stabilisation. The evolution is driven by milestones such as market changes, product complexity, and investor entry, with systems becoming increasingly formalised and robust over time.

Conclusão

Performance management in startups is a dynamic process that evolves. Initially characterised by rapid adaptation to external pressures, it gradually becomes more formalised and efficiency-oriented. This trajectory highlights the need for performance systems that are flexible, robust, and responsive to organisational context.

Contribuição / Impacto

The study proposes a temporal model for startup performance management, contributing to the literature on dynamic capabilities and strategic entrepreneurship. Practically, it guides founders and managers in aligning metrics and processes to each stage of development, strengthening resilience and competitive advantage.

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