PROPERTIES OF EMERGING ORGANIZATIONS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM NORWAY (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY

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Principal Topics

The formation of an organization is a dynamic process in which activities such as obtaining resources, developing products, hiring employees, and seeking funds are undertaken at different times and in different orders (Gartner, 1985). Current research often builds on Katz and Gartner’s (1988) well-regarded framework, which posits that four basic properties -- intentionality, boundary, resources and exchange -- are central to organizational emergence. Recently, Brush, Manolova and Edelman (2008) tested the framework in its entirety, finding that all four properties are necessary for firm survival. This research extends the work of Brush et al, (2008) to the Norwegian context. We hypothesize that each of the four properties and the completeness of property accumulation will be positively associated with the likelihood to continue organizing, whereas temporal concentration will follow an inverted “U” relationship with the likelihood to continue.

Method

Data for the study came from a large representative sample of Norwegians 18 or older, stratified by county (n=203), who were surveyed three times over a four-year period (1996-1999) using a structured questionnaire and a telephone survey. To model the likelihood of continuing the organizing effort, we implemented discrete-time survival analysis, controlling for demographic and business characteristics.

Results and Implications

We find that in the Norwegian context intentionality, boundary, and exchange are all significantly associated with the likelihood to continue, while resources are not. Further, entrepreneurs in Norway who engage in a larger number of start-up activities are more likely to continue the organizing effort in the short term. On the other hand, examination of activity concentration shows that to a certain point, developing all properties simultaneously is beneficial, but above an optimum point, the organizing process will be unsuccessful. In a post-hoc test, we compare the Norwegian study to PSED (I) and find that the effects of property completeness and temporal dynamics are similar across the two national contexts, whereas the effects of individual start-up activities vary. Thus, our research extends the empirical analysis of a well-regarded framework to a new institutional context.

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