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≈ INTERACTIVE PAPER ≈

RESOURCE BASED VIEW OF FIRM COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES FROM TEAMING UP WITH UNIVERSITIES

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Principal Topic

This article adopts a resource based view of university spin-offs and uses evidence from the Kauffman Firm Survey (KFS) to explore the resource stocks and innovation activities. Three questions are explored. The first question is whether internal firm R&D activity or patent stocks increase the likelihood that collaboration with universities provides a reason for the firm competitive advantage. The second question is whether cooperative resource stocks from collaborations with other companies or government laboratories increase the likelihood that collaboration with universities provides a reason for firm competitive advantage. The third question focuses on firm size and asks whether firm size plays a role in whether firms obtain a competitive advantage from university collaborations. And if they do, is the reported strength of the competitive advantage considered to be major or minor.

Method

The hypotheses are tested using binary logistic regression. The data used in this study is from the fourth follow-up survey of 1,198 KFS firms in their fifth year of firm operations. The KFS is a longitudinal study of the characteristics and founders of 4,928 firms that commenced operations in 2004. The goal of the KFS is to gather data on the founders, financing, products and services, characteristics and other factors that influence entrepreneurial outcomes. The baseline survey of these firms was completed in July 2006 and was followed by additional surveys that have been made publicly available.

Results and Implications

The results of the study are consistent with resource based views of the firm. The study finds that the firms reporting competitive advantages from university collaborations had higher R&D expenditures, valuable patent portfolios and advantageous alliances with other companies and government laboratories. The study also finds that while the incidence of firms reporting competitive advantages from collaborating with universities decreased with firm size, the strength of the competitive advantage obtained from university collaborations that were reported increased with firm size. These findings have implications for future research into the roles of heterogeneous resource bundles and firm absorptive capacity on the firm level outcomes from university-industry collaborations.

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