TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS DURING A MERGER: AN ANALYSIS IN THE FRENCH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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INTERACTIVE PAPER SESSION

TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS DURING A MERGER: AN ANALYSIS IN THE FRENCH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

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Principal Topic

The enterprises, in order to acquire and rapidly integrate technological skills, which already exist on the market, can take recourse to merger operations. The transfer of technologies between two organizations finds its roots in the merger and acquisition integration process (MA). However, if technological MA initially inspire hope, they also often disappoint. In fact, beside the positive effects of mergers, several researches underline also the negative effect on the impact of technology, which is often diluted by the operation (Breitzman et al., 2002). Nevertheless, with regard to the growing importance of inter-organizational technological skills transfer in the context of an MA, this phenomenon has so far been largely neglected or only partly studied in literature. In fact, the major weakness of research on inter-organizational skills transfer lies in ignorance of the dynamic and procedural dimension of this phenomenon. These studies are putting forward a hypothesis according to which certain types of external growth operations are more favourable to the process of transfer of intangible assets between two entities than others (Takeishi, 2001), without analyzing the process itself. Similarly, most of the research uses quantitative methodology which aims more at highlighting what slows down the transfer process than understanding the procedural dynamic. These gaps are especially evident in the context of merger operations in the information technology and communication sectors. Thus, to overcome this gap, the purpose of this research is to answer the following question: how does the process of inter-organizational transfer of technological competences during the integration process of a merger takes place?

Method

To answer this question, we concentrated on a single case study of a merger in the new technology sector of France. The data was collected through different ways: participative observations of the Board of Directors and of General Meetings, which lead to the formation of Verbal Processes; realisation of 55 interviews.

Results and Implications

Our results leaded us to highlight the specificities of the context in which the merger operations happen. It also underlines the importance of formalizing the integration process and clarifying the communication process.

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