THE ROLE OF BRICOLAGE AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS IN HIGH POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY VENTURES (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY
THE ROLE OF BRICOLAGE AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS IN HIGH POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY VENTURES

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Principal Topic
Sustainability decisions and subsequent impacts may be one of the greatest challenges facing the world in the 21st century (Davos 2000). Increasing awareness of environmental issues has fostered many opportunities for businesses (Dean & McMullen 2007) with a sustainability focus. Young ventures have only recently begun generating research interest within sustainability literature (Shepherd et al. 2009). In particular, little is known about how these ventures make resource decisions under resource constraints (Shepherd et al., 2000).

One promising theory that explicitly links to how ventures manage resource constraints is bricolage (Levi Strauss, 1967). Bricolage aligns with notions of resourcefulness: using what’s on hand, through making do, and recombining resources for new or novel purposes (Baker & Nelson 2005). These high potential sustainability ventures face complex resource requirements as a result of higher levels of novelty (Rothaermel & Deeds 2006) increasing the potential for resource constraints. Further, they are often developed by entrepreneurs committed to values that focus on conservation rather than consumption of resources. The continuous conflict between greater resource requirements and limited available resources may make bricolage critical for these firms.

The following research question was developed to investigate this:
How do resource constraints impact bricolage behaviours in high potential sustainability ventures?

Method
We use a case methodology to investigate this research (Yin, 2003). 7 case studies in sustainability industries were developed using ventures currently participating in the CAUSEE project: a large longitudinal survey of venture start-ups in Australia. We conducted multiple semi-structured interviews (28 in total) for each case, and triangulated this with CAUSEE data, onsite visits and secondary documentation.

Results and Implications
Based on initial analysis of results and using multidisciplinary literature including contingency and resource perspectives, we reveal critical constraints including the global financial crisis and institutional impacts that shape and influence bricolage decisions. For theory, this research further extends bricolage literature through beginning to unpack the complexity of constraints that align with sustainability issues. For practice, this research provides a better understanding of under what conditions bricolage is instigated. This insight may lead to better program provision and resource support for these significant ventures.

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