EXPLORING, EXPLOITING AND EFFECTIVE? THE DIALECTICS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE IN POST-ACCESSION ECONOMY ORGANIZATIONS
(INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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INTERACTIVE PAPER

EXPLORING, EXPLOITING AND EFFECTIVE? THE DIALECTICS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE IN POST-ACCESSION ECONOMY ORGANIZATIONS

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Principal Topic

The objective of this paper is to build and test a dialectical framework for analyzing contradictions of the organizational entrepreneurial learning. As a result of literature synthesis, we created a model describing 12 contradictions identified in the process of entrepreneurial learning. The model is further tested empirically, in order to analyze whether, and to what extent the post-accession businesses are learning and entrepreneurial organizations, and which contradictions are reconciled to the highest extent. We also attempt to identify relations between entrepreneurial learning and organizational performance.

Method

The preliminary empirical research testing the theoretical framework was carried out in the first half of 2008. We conducted a survey among 308 business companies operating in Poland. The questionnaire statements were based on a seven-grade Likert scale. For each question there were two statements to be assessed, reflecting two opposites in a contradiction. In order to analyze how these contradictions are reconciled, the values obtained on a Likert scale were transferred to the two-coordinate grid. The profile of entrepreneurial learning was calculated as a distance from the upper right corner of the grid (coordinates 7, 7 – best answer) to the point with coordinates (x, y) representing the statement assessments. Finally, the entrepreneurial learning components were correlated with financial and non-financial measures of organizational performance.

Results and Implications

Most of the researched organizations are able to reconcile a number of contradictions in entrepreneurial learning. In spite of a clear entrepreneurial-learning-performance link, relatively not many organizations are able to fully manage all contradictions of entrepreneurial learning. Moreover, majority of them choose quick, fixed and one-sided solutions, thus not fully benefiting from the learning process in opportunity identification and exploitation.

This study contributes to several streams of research. First, it adds to the entrepreneurship literature by demonstrating the dialectical perspective as a framework for analyzing organizational entrepreneurial learning. Second, the model is built proposing the contradictions that constitute organizational entrepreneurial learning. Third, a preliminary research is presented, testing the proposed model. The practical implication of this research is the suggestion to include certain dimensions of entrepreneurial learning in performance measurement and management systems.