THE ROLE OF BRICOLAGE IN SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE (SUMMARY)

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Principal Topic
While the resource based view (RBV) of the firm has often examined the role of human capital in building sustainable competitive advantage; and work in entrepreneurial bricolage has investigated the process of combining human capital assets to create value under conditions of time and resource constraints, the properties of human capital that enable successful combination have been largely unexamined. This study aims to fill that gap by examining the differential success that organizations have at combining people with varying human capital. We develop a typology of bricolage strategies based on the types of human capital that organizations acquire, which enables us to hypothesize about the attributes of human capital that can be more successfully bricolaged. We draw a distinction between characteristic-based human capital (i.e., human capital that is inherent in the individual and independent of their experiences) and knowledge-based human capital (i.e., human capital that is generated from the individual's experience), and hypothesize that knowledge-based human capital increases the likelihood of human capital bricolage, while characteristic-based human capital decreases that likelihood. Furthermore, we hypothesize that employees who have been with an organization for a long time are less likely to be bricolaged.

Method
We test our hypotheses using a 10-year sample of individual and team performance data from the National Basketball Association. We operationalize human capital bricolage using measures of the way a player is used differently after being traded from one organization to another in the middle of a season, and use panel regression to determine the extent to which midseason moves represent human capital bricolage or other strategies.

Results and Implications
Our empirical results strongly support the hypothesis that characteristic-based human capital decreases the likelihood of human capital bricolage, and tentatively support the hypothesis that knowledge-based human capital increases the likelihood of HCB. We also find support for the hypothesis that long-term employees are less likely to be bricolaged. Taken as a whole, our results suggest that heterogeneous expectations with respect to the value of human capital tend to encourage human capital bricolage.

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