6-11-2011

THE IMPACT OF NETWORKS ON CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: LOST IN THE STRUCTURAL HOLES (SUMMARY)

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**Recommended Citation**
Nikiforou, Argyro; Lioukas, Spyros; and Voudouris, Irini (2011) "THE IMPACT OF NETWORKS ON CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: LOST IN THE STRUCTURAL HOLES (SUMMARY)," *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*: Vol. 31 : Iss. 17 , Article 15.
Available at: https://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol31/iss17/15

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THE IMPACT OF NETWORKS ON CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: LOST IN THE STRUCTURAL HOLES

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Principal Topic
Drawing from social network theory and corporate entrepreneurship (CE) literature, this study examines how the structural holes of a firm’s market and technological networks, their content, as well as their interactive effect influence CE. Its aim is twofold. First, to account for different types of networks in the context of CE demonstrating that “not all structural holes are of the same colour” and second, to capture network content, which is not often examined in network studies.

Method
The research is based on data collected from Greek small and medium-sized firms, belonging to six industrial sectors: ICT, Food & Beverage, Chemicals, Printing & Publishing, Electric Equipment & Electronics, and Machinery.

To capture market and technological networks, an ego-centered network methodology was adopted. Additionally to measuring structural holes, network content is measured by accounting for the intensity of the information the firm acquires from each networking tie and the dissimilarity of the information from the firm’s own existing base of knowledge.

The significance of the main and interaction effects was assessed using hierarchical regression models.

Results and Implications
Results provide evidence that market structural holes and technological dissimilar information positively influence CE, whereas market dissimilar information and technological structural holes do not have an impact. Additionally, the interactive effect of market network structural holes and dissimilar information is found to have a negative impact on CE.

The present paper has several research and managerial implications. The divergent results and the negative interaction stress the importance of measuring network content and the different types of networks. They also suggest that future research should assess networks’ impact on CE through the lenses of bounded rationality perspective and knowledge relatedness, proactiveness, and specificity. Lastly, it discusses the benefits of networks for the small and medium-sized firms drawing their attention to the type of networks they are involved, as well as the counter-effects of network information overload.

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