

The relation between coepetition and innovation/entrepreneurship

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Abstract This special issue is an outcome of the 2017 Global Innovation and Knowledge Academy (GIKA) Conference, which took place at ISEG School of Economics and Management, Lisbon, Portugal, between June 28th and 30th, 2017. As the seventh of its kind, the 2017 GIKA Conference continued to attract the attention of scholars from around the world, receiving more than 600 submissions, only 300 of which were accepted for presentation at the conference. The topic of this special issue—the relation between coepetition and innovation/entrepreneurship—had an own track at the GIKA Conference, which served as a first round review for some of the submissions to the journal. The special issue was also open for external submissions.

Keywords Coepetition · Innovation · Entrepreneurship

1 Introduction

Scholarly interest in coepetition has grown over the last two decades. Although there is no standard definition of coepetition (Gast et al. 2015), coepetition is more than just a mix of cooperation and competition (Morris et al. 2007), two concepts that, individually, have been studied extensively. Coepetition refers to merging cooperation and competition to form a new type of strategic relationship

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between firms (Dagnino and Padula 2002; Kraus et al. 2017). Today, cooperation between competitors represents a strategic competitiveness factor.

Gast et al. (2015) and Bouncken et al. (2015) conducted extensive reviews of the cooptition literature, grouping studies and proposing ideas for future research. Cooptition studies have primarily focused on large or multinational companies (Dagnino and Padula 2002; Dussauge et al. 2000; Kanter 1994). In contrast, SMEs and start-ups have received less attention in the cooptition literature. SMEs' characteristics differ from those of large firms. SMEs normally have fewer resources, smaller market shares (often targeting niche markets), and greater vulnerability to environmental factors.

Morris et al. (2007) report that small firms have less to contribute in a cooperative strategy than large firms do because small firms' core competencies are still under development and the learning in these organizations is less systematic and organized than it is in large firms. Another issue is that entrepreneurs, who must focus on the increasing need to grow and develop their firms, are unable to dedicate attention to cooptition or invest the resources that it requires.

Crucially, however, cooptition offers small firms an opportunity to enter certain markets that start-ups would otherwise be unable to access on their own. Therefore, a strategy of cooperating with competitors allows small firms to access markets where large firms dominate (Morris et al. 2007) and where innovation is a requirement to be competitive. As mentioned, some studies have focused on SMEs (Thomason et al. 2013; Bengtsson and Johansson 2014; Ribeiro-Soriano et al. 2016), but few have addressed family firms or start-ups, as Gast et al. (2015) note.

Cooptition offers firms certain advantages that stem from the synergies of sharing costs, risks, economies of scale (Luo 2007; Gnyawali and Park 2009, 2011; Osarenkhoe 2010), R&D operations (Walley 2007), and access to knowledge and external resources (Bengtsson and Kock 2000; Akdoğan and Cingöz 2012). Rodrigues et al. (2011) report that cooptition can boost sales, market share, and international brand recognition and successfully enable market penetration strategies.

Today's turbulent competitive environments, coupled with intense competition, mean that innovation provides a source of competitive advantage. Yet, to ensure sustainability nowadays, it is not enough for many firms to have outstanding, novel, innovative products or advantages in resources and capabilities. For these firms, the ability to compete depends on their capacity to cooperate (Morris et al. 2007). In such cases, a cooperation strategy allows firms to utilize organizational resources, and it may be useful to protect the firm's competitive status in the market (Dyer and Singh 1998).

Despite the importance of cooptition and innovation, the literature lacks a thorough exploration of the link between cooptition and innovation. However, because cooptition and innovation capabilities are more important in complex, dynamic environments, it is crucial to study the conditions under which firms are capable of cooperating to yield benefits, which constitutes an essential part of regional development (Quintana-Garcia and Benavides-Velasco 2004; Mention 2011). In light of the above, studies that explore the relationship between cooptition and entrepreneurship would be of interest.

Accordingly, some studies have begun to link coope...
2012; Bouncken and Fredrich 2012; Ritala and Sainio 2014; West and Bogers 2014; Yami and Neme...
2014; Bouncken et al. 2016). As innovation becomes further rooted in the organization's capacity to access external knowledge sources, coope...
increasingly shares a positive relationship with innovation, which offers a mechanism for organizational learning (Bengtsson and Kock 2000; Mas-Tur and Soriano 2014). Nevertheless, few studies have evaluated the mechanisms that firms employ to protect their core competencies, skills, and knowledge (Gast et al. 2015).

Scholars have shown that coope...
can contribute to different types of innovation: incremental and radical innovation (Bouncken and Fredrich 2012; Yami and Neme...
2014), open innovation (Enkel et al. 2009; Chesbrough and Bogers 2014), and technological innovation (Ritala and Sainio 2014).

Bengtsson and Kock (2000) and Osarenkhoe (2010) have found that cooperation is more important during the early phases of the innovation process, whereas competition is more important in the latter stages, namely when the firm has launched the product. In many cases, coope...
offers an attractive strategy to improve the firm's competitive performance and ensure the success of radical innovations (Bouncken and Fredrich 2012). Accordingly, coope...
potentially offers competitive advantages that derive from the firm's ability to develop products or services that the same firm on its own could never develop or would take too long to do so (Ganguli 2007; Walley 2007).

Nevertheless, certain scholars affirm that coope...
can hinder or delay the innovation process and curb investment in new technologies (Amaldoss et al. 2000; Gomes-Casseres 1997; Jorde and Teece 1989). For example, Robson and Bennett (2000) argue that collaboration in a horizontal relationship has no positive influence on firm performance. The articles in this special issue tackle numerous issues surrounding the relationships between coope...
innovation, and entrepreneurship.

2 Contributions

Out of the 25 submissions received on the relation between coope...
and innovation/entrepreneurship for consideration in this special issue, only seven manuscripts were accepted. Submission was possible either via the conference, or independently submitted directly to the journal. For those submissions which were submitted via the GIKA 2017, the two reviews for the conference track served as a first review round. Regardless of how they were submitted, all 25 contributions to this special issue had to go through an additional review process of two or three rounds following the conference. This process required approval from at least two anonymous reviewers in order to be selected for publication in the journal.

In the first article, "Coope...
in coworking-spaces: value creation and appropriation tensions in an entrepreneurial space," Bouncken, Laudien, Görmär, and Fredrich primarily use interview data to explain four prototype institutions of coworking-spaces: the corporate coworking-space, the open corporate coworking-space, the consultancy coworking-space, and the independent coworking-space. Hora, Gast, Kailer, Rey-Marti and Mas-Tur present "David and Goliath: causes and effects of

coopetition between start-ups and corporates.” The authors use multiple case studies to explore the motives of coopeting start-ups and corporates, their management of cooperative relationships, and the implications regarding potential benefits and risks.

The next contribution, “New MNE subsidiaries in old clusters: when, why, and how,” by Belso-Martínez, López-Sánchez, and Mateu-García presents a case study to explore how the creation and activity of a specialized subsidiary and the evolution of the industrial system interweave. The findings confirm that subsidiary embeddedness and autonomy are at the heart of successful creation and performance. “Organizational innovativeness and coopetition: a study of video game developers,” by Klimas and Czakon, explores the interdependency between organizational innovativeness and coopetition using correlation and regression analyses. They report a significant positive relationship between organizational innovativeness and direct and indirect coopetition.

In the next contribution, “Developing green innovation performance by fostering of organizational knowledge and cooperative relations,” Albort-Morant, Leal-Millán, Cepeda-Carrion, and Henseler use PLS path-modeling to explore the links between firms’ knowledge base, relationship learning, and green innovation performance under a cooperative framework. In the contribution titled “Paving the way for cooperation: drivers for work-life balance policy implementation,” Adame-Sánchez, Capliure, and Miquel-Romero apply fsQCA to data for 132 Spanish SMEs to analyze the role of external financial assistance and specific laws together with budgetary provision for work-life balance policies and managers’ perceptions regarding work-life conflict.

Finally, Vanyushyn, Bengtsson, Näsholm, and Boter present “International coopetition for innovation: are the benefits worth the challenges?”, a contribution which has been awarded with the Best Paper award of the “Coopetition and Innovation/Entrepreneurship” track at the GIKA 2017 conference. Building on survey data, the authors confirm that companies that participate in international cooperation with competitors have a higher propensity to introduce radical innovations.

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