Chapter 2

Connecting Knowledge Management and Entrepreneurship:
Processes and Technology

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ABSTRACT

This chapter reviews examples of how technologies that support knowledge management (KM) can link it to entrepreneurship, and in doing so, can increase the possibility of connecting domains that have traditionally been separated, both in the literature and in the practice of entrepreneurship. In particular, authors describe the utilization of KM processes and tools in a variety of organizations. They also link extant models of processes that support KM and entrepreneurship and propose their integration. Previous work examined the uneven track record of KM utilization in entrepreneurial organizations. In this analysis, authors take a broader view of its application with a specific eye towards KM technologies and by linking entrepreneurial and KM processes of new ventures.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we review examples of how technologies that support knowledge management (KM) can link it to entrepreneurship, and in doing so, can increase the possibility of connecting domains that have traditionally been separated, both in the literature and in the practice of entrepreneurship. In particular, we describe the utilization of KM processes and tools in a variety of organizations. We also link extant models of processes that support KM and entrepreneurship and propose their integration. Previous work examined the uneven track record of KM utilization in entrepreneurial organizations. In this analysis, we take a broader view of its application with a specific eye towards KM technologies and by linking entrepreneurial and KM processes of new ventures.

Knowledge Management and Entrepreneurship

The link between Knowledge Management (KM) and entrepreneurship is a tale of mixed results as put forth by prior work (Bandera, Passerini et al. 2019). We further explore these mixed results using a digital lens and connecting KM and entrepreneurship though the processes and technologies that support them. Ways in which this support manifests, discussed below, include supporting knowledge sharing and creating new ventures, creating new digitally mediated collaborative working relationships, and reviving faltering organizational units or enabling technology-supported spin-offs.

It is the general consensus of researchers and practitioners that KM is facilitated with the use of information technology (I/T). I/T systems facilitate the creation of new enterprises and may play an instrumental role in indirectly linking KM and entrepreneurship. Solomon and Linton (Solomon and Linton 2016) point out that "while expansions and implosions of individual small business many not be eye-catching on an individual basis, the cumulative social and economic benefits provided by entrepreneurial and small firms engaging with technology and innovation is substantial."

Supporting Knowledge Sharing

New technologies, such as wikis, are being utilized to foster the institutionalization of knowledge and its easy dissemination across an organization. Some of this knowledge is scientific in nature and Pillay and Barnard (Pillay and Barnard 2019) state that "Entrepreneurs extensively consume scientific research, particularly to expand their knowledge bases. … collaboration between entrepreneurs and universities can unlock further opportunities in this regard." While the exchange of knowledge

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