Knowledge creation in New Ventures based on the SECI-Model: Similarities and differences between Japan, South Korea and Austria

The theoretical framework of my non-representative research is the SECI-Model by Nonaka Ikujiro and Takeuchi Hirotaka. Under the consideration of five conditions, which must be given in a company, new knowledge can be created through the interaction of implicit and explicit knowledge by passing through the four modes socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation.

Methodology and Approach

For my research I used quantitative and qualitative methods. Firstly, I designed a questionnaire consisting of 21 questions on knowledge creating activities in companies on basis of the SECI-model. Through an intensive literature review I identified altogether 16 activities to the four modes socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation and five activities to the five conditions of the SECI-model. Participants of my questionnaire are new ventures from Japan, South Korea and Austria. My study is not to examine the effect of the SECI-model on knowledge creation, but to examine the differences and similarities in Japan, South Korea and Austria. Further, there already have been various studies on the application of the SECI-model in Japan. On the contrary, South Korea and Austria have scarcely been researched until now. A comparison between Japanese, South Korean and Austrian new ventures in terms of knowledge creation also hasn’t been conducted yet.

Main Facts

My questionnaire and interview results showed that in the majority of the companies of all three countries the affirmative answers outweighed the negative answers in all four modes and all five conditions of the SECI-model. The only exception is the application of the fifth condition ‘creative chaos’ in the Austrian new ventures. Participants of my questionnaire agreed that ambitious goals of their management often lead to a sense of crisis/stress condition for their employees. The majority of the Austrian companies disagreed (28.9 percent agree/42.3 percent disagree). Still the difference between agreement and disagreement was less than 20 percent.

Creative Chaos

Figure two: Creative chaos in Japanese, South Korean and Austrian new ventures

In order to reach a conclusion I also asked my interview partners for their opinion. In contrast to my Japanese and South Korean interviewees, all of my questioned Austrian interview partners disagreed and they also emphasized that they don’t think that crisis situations can be positive for an organization. Therefore I concluded that with the exception of creative chaos the other four conditions of the SECI-model are given in the majority of the 54 Austrian new ventures.

Results

1. All four modes of the SECI-Model are applied in the majority of the 154 surveyed Japanese, South Korean and Austrian new ventures.
2. In the majority of the 154 surveyed Japanese, South Korean and Austrian new ventures, the focus lies on both tacit and explicit knowledge.
3. All five conditions of the SECI-model are applied in the majority of the surveyed Japanese and South Korean new ventures. However, in the majority of the Austrian new ventures the fifth condition of the SECI-model ‘creative chaos’ is not given.

Lots of similarities can be found between the 154 surveyed new ventures. Nevertheless one important difference exists: the majority of the Japanese and South Korean new ventures stated that their management often intentionally causes senses of crisis/stress conditions that can support the exchange of information and knowledge in a company. The majority of the Austrian companies however don’t hold the opinion that ambitious goals of their management lead to stress conditions for the employees and furthermore they don’t think that such crisis situations can be positive for a company.

References


About the Author

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