

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to expand current knowledge on the development of corporate entrepreneurship and to contribute new theoretical and empirical insights into strategic entrepreneurship. To those ends, the thesis attempts to answer two research questions. First, how has the field of corporate entrepreneurship research evolved in terms of main themes, applied methods and theory, and what do these developments reveal about the future trajectories of the field? Second, what is the relationship between internal organizational factors and strategic entrepreneurship in the form of sustained regeneration, organizational rejuvenation, and strategic renewal? To answer the first question, a systematic and comprehensive review of 344 articles addressing the development of research on corporate entrepreneurship during 1969–2017 was conducted. To answer the second question, a survey was administered at a major financial services company to examine the relationship among four internal organizational factors and three forms of strategic entrepreneurship. The overall conclusion of the literature review is that corporate entrepreneurship is a growing and, in several respects, maturing field of research. Signs of its maturity are undermined, however, by the lack of commonly applied theories and theoretical frameworks. Those findings take support from the overall conclusion of the second study, which highlights the need to develop and further test empirically existing frameworks, constructs, and theoretical connections within literature on strategic entrepreneurship.

Taken together, the findings of the thesis suggest that corporate entrepreneurship faces the difficult challenge of developing a set of more distinct, unifying theories and conceptual frameworks. Concerning strategic entrepreneurship, it is concluded that research on this topic should consider specific organizational structures and conditions of the company and, at the same time, it should also develop greater sensitivity to the effects of industry and institutional settings. The findings also highlight that internal organizational factors could have differentiated effects on the main forms of strategic entrepreneurship.