

Dynamics of Openness in SMEs: A Business Model and Innovation Strategy Perspective

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Abstract

Purpose: In order to explore the dynamics of openness within SMEs, this study investigates how business model transformation relates to innovation strategy transformation.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research is conducted as a longitudinal qualitative single case study in order to fully follow transformation as a process.

Findings: This research revealed that openness in SMEs is not about continuously increasing the level of openness, but SMEs can also begin to close their innovation strategy, even though the business model stays open. The level of openness varies based on strategic openness.

Research limitations/implications: This study emphasizes that openness needs to be viewed as a continuum, where the level of openness may fluctuate during transformation. Furthermore, openness in business models and openness in innovation indeed are separate phenomena.

Practical implications: Having an understanding how strategic openness guides business model transformation enables practitioners to better utilize open innovation as an innovation strategy.

Originality/value: Through focusing on the relationship between business model transformation and innovation strategy transformation, we broaden the discussion on the dynamics of openness within SMEs.

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