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A SHORT REVIEW

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1 Introduction

In this report, a journal article written by Gately and Cunningham(2014) is chosen from the list to be reviewed. The selected one is a qualitative research, providing theoretical arguments through content analysis and in-depth interview. Firstly, some general text is to be discussed, focusing on research topic, research question, research aim, contribution, and findings. Moreover, the research methods of content analysis and in-depth interview which were applied in the journal article is to be analyzed. Furthermore, the limitation of is to be examined.

2 Research topic and research question

2.1 Research topic

Research topic refers to the collection of people, events, behaviors, processes and meanings which are interested in and focused on by researchers. It is the area that is to be covered in the followed research. The research area, just like a map, determined the certain region and boundary of research question in advance(Myers and Well, 2010). Compared with the research question, the range of research area is broader, so as not to exclude other important possibilities. In defining research phenomena, researchers should keep an open and flexible attitude, avoiding inserting some untested presuppositions into the expression of research phenomena. In addition, whether the research phenomenon we choose is feasible under the existing conditions is also needed to be considered. How the technology entrepreneurs construct the intellectual capital in social setting was the research topic to discuss in the article. The research topic was feasible under the conditions where the study was processed. The relational capital, which was a significant support for technology graduates to seek for new venture opportunity has been took into consideration by researchers and become a popular subject recently(Peña, 2002).

2.2 Research question

With the development of the research, the research area is constantly narrowed down to a more specific focus, which is the research question. Some scholars argue that

research question in social science research can be divided into many different types (Maxwell, 2010). These types are closely related to the content of the research question, the presupposition implied in the statement, and the expected results of the research (Chen, 1999). The research question of this study is how technology students construct relational capital in the universities and colleges of start-up period of company. This research question explains the phenomenon of the relational capital construction activity of student entrepreneur in higher education institutions rather than testifying a certain assumption. On one hand, researchers really do not understand this problem, and wish to have a depth discussion through studying. On the other hand, the location (university and college), people (student) and event (relational capital construction) involved in this research question do exist in real life. Therefore, this research question are their real concerns, making sense to students.

3 Research aim and contribution

3.1 Research aim

Research purpose refers to the motivation, reason, and expectation of researchers for conducting a research (Babbie, 2013). These purposes may vary depending on the researcher's personal background, the social group to which he or she belongs, and the phenomenon being investigated. A research could be started from the personal objective, such as the willingness of changing an existing social system and the interest of a special social phenomenon (Hennink and Weber, 2013). A research also could be initiated from the practical objective, for instance, solving social problems, completing a task or providing action guidance. The research object of the journal article is to understand and explain the activity of technology entrepreneurs to construct relational capital in the university and college when they start their own company. Therefore, this article could offer some useful knowledge and exploration for humans to understand the world and pursue the truth for scientific objective.

3.2 Contribution

The contribution of research refers to the value of research or its effect on the personnel

or social institutions(Babbie, 2013). That is why we are going to conduct this research and what we can obtain from it. In general, research contribution consists of theoretical element and practical aspect. The theoretical contribution is to fill the research gap which can be found out by reviewing the previous literature. The practical contribution refers to solve problems in reality(Neuman, 2007). Therefore, business researchers pay more attentions to make practical contribution. From the practical perspective, this article indicates that Incubator program is necessary to support relational capital construction of student entrepreneurs. The intellectual property and network of higher education institutes play a significant role in promoting the entrepreneurial plan of students. Moreover, this journal article makes a contribution to identify 4 kinds of relational capital construction exercises for graduates in the South East of Ireland.

4 Data collection

There are varied research methods which should be determined by various factors of research question, research purpose, research situation and research object, rather than choosing for the method itself(Peacock, 2001). A multi-method approach, including content analysis and the qualitative interviewing was used in the journal article. Considering that every approaches of data collection has benefits and drawbacks(Gill et al., 2008), therefore, the choice of data collection is appropriate for this qualitative research.

4.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a kind of unobtrusive research approach(Li, 2007). Researchers can find and analyze social issues with the help of various documents, including newspapers, periodicals, books and other written publications through content analysis(Babbie, 2013). It is not necessary to directly observe the behavior of the research objects, nor directly communicate and interact with them. Also, research activity do not cause the reaction of the research participants and nor the interfere with their behaviors(Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). In this journal article, 40 business plans from The South East Enterprise Platform Program were chosen through

the special filtering procedure. All the 40 business plans were transcribed into 909 pages of content and then they were coded using the software of NVivo.

4.2 In-depth interview

In-depth interview is a one-to-one data collection method, in which the specific topics can be discussed between interviewers and interviewees. Generally, researchers usually follow the semi-structured or non-structured interview guideline, which is conducive to understanding personal life and the subjectivity of interviewees (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010). The interviewers and participants create knowledge and meaning together in the qualitative interviewing, constructing the common reality. Therefore, in-depth interviews can reveal important, hidden aspects of human behavior and organizational activities (Quand Dumay, 2011). In this study, 25 participants who submitted business plans in the SEEPP were selected as primary data sample. These technology graduates were divided into five different type of technology entrepreneur (Jones-Evans, 1995), and were in-depth interviewed to understand how they construct relational capital when build a new venture formation.

5 Findings

The research found that technology students of university and college build the relation capital at the beginning of the company through 4 kinds of activities. According to the research question of the journal article, this main finding interpreted the issue appropriately raised by the author. Moreover, the research also indicated the network, which is based on customers is more essential than other forms to construct relation capital. In addition, entrepreneurs regard that public relationship is one of most useful and low-priced approaches of self-promotion. Furthermore, the research also found that Research entrepreneurs took their alma mater and incubated company as the source and beginning line for relation capital construction.

6 Research limitations

6.1 Limitation of method

Although content analysis can avoid interfering with the research object, its shortcomings are also obvious. The data used in the research are not collected according to the theme of this research. All existing business plans are inseparable from the objective environment they faced with, subjective knowledge structure they hold and writing purpose of the owners(Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Therefore, the difference of the context and the purpose between the researcher and the applicant may lead to the deviation in the understanding and application of the text. At the same time, as the in-depth interview is one to one or one to two method, researcher can't get feedback from others in an in-depth interview(Creswell, 2007). In addition, researchers also need to apply special techniques to build rapport with the participants. In the process of in-depth interviews, researchers also need to be flexible to avoid missing important information through adjusting the outline according to the participants. Generally, in-depth interview is applied with other data collection methods, such as observation and focus-group(Chen, 1999).

6.2 Limitation of data

First of all, as all the business plans for content analysis was selected from the South East Enterprise Platform Programme, as well as the participants were these technology graduates in the South East of Ireland, which applied for CORD-funded, therefore, the information disclosure was not perfect, and existed problems as lack of data. Moreover, the business plans were selected for analysis only covered a short period from year 2013 to year 2017, so its regularity could not be fully reflected in this study. In addition, 20 qualified entrepreneurs who was funded by CORD refused to participate in the in-depth interviewing. As the result, only 25 technology entrepreneurs were interviewed in this study. The sample size was small, and the data was insufficient, which may not fully represent all the activities of relational capital construction and the research findings may not be applied in all kind of incubated technology companies.

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