COMPETITIVE LEARNING AND JOINT LEARNING IN INTERNATIONAL JOINT VENTURE

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ABSTRACT

As is the case in most normal independent organizations, international joint ventures (IJVs) are expected to be influenced by both stabilizing and destabilizing forces. Because of their inter-organizational hybrid nature, the tension between IJV partners may be considerably more complex than independent entities. This research emphasizes that inter-partner learning does not just play a role in IJV instability, but also helps sustain a stable IJV. More importantly, this study empirically tested the interpartner learning mechanism, through which instability/stability occurs.

Specifically, it focused on how resource structure, knowledge characteristics, relational mechanism, and partner fit influence different types of learning, which provided a model explicating a mix of driving forces and restraining forces of IJV instability. From this position, the present research enriched both the organizational learning and IJV instability literature. A survey study was conducted in China, which is currently the largest emerging economy in the world. A great number of foreign firms have been forming IJVs with local Chinese firms. During this process, both foreign firms and local firms may need some guidance as they develop collaboration, particularly in how to learn from and how to learn together with each other. There were 124 usable questionnaires collected from one party of the IJVs for the study. The results showed that competitive learning destabilized IJVs, while joint learning stabilized IJVs. Furthermore, numerous antecedents to interpartner learning were elucidated and supported by
statistical evaluations, which provided important prescriptive information for interpartner learning. Also, the study provided managerial implications from different perspectives. The IJV partner firm that would like to exert either or both learning behaviors can work on fostering the antecedents. This dissertation ended with a discussion of limitations and the future research.