

PhD defense Kande Kazadi - Faculty of Applied Economics

“Stakeholder cocreation during the innovation process: the role and impact of capabilities from a firm and customer perspective”

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Abstract: Recently, a growing number of firms have realized that their innovation goals cannot be satisfied solely through their internal resources and routines. Consequently, firms are increasingly supplementing their internal innovation efforts by tapping into the skills of a variety of external stakeholders. Stakeholder cocreation refers to firms conducting collaborative activities undertaken with one or more external stakeholders that contribute to a firm's innovation process. Such expanded collaboration with multiple stakeholders, creates opportunities for unique knowledge creation and in turn, firm performance. Yet, concurrently, these socially complex interactions create new challenges for firms. The aim of the four studies presented in this dissertation, is to identify the capabilities to address these challenges. Moreover, we zoom in on the use of digital platforms for stakeholder cocreation and the effects of stakeholder cocreation on consumer adoption of new products.

Chapter two develops a conceptual framework that delineates the specific capabilities required for creating knowledge with multiple stakeholders during the innovation process. We do so by conducting an in-depth case study, examining stakeholder cocreation activities in the pharmaceutical industry. These findings lay the groundwork for chapter three. Chapter three develops and validates a theoretical model in which a moderation is proposed, implying that the relationship between exploitative, exploratory and technological knowledge cocreation activities and firm performance is contingent on the level of stakeholder diversity and two proposed cocreation capabilities. This model is tested using data from a worldwide survey amongst 120 top executives. Chapter four zooms in on one specific way to gather contributions from external stakeholders, namely through open virtual teams (OVTs). Such open virtual teams bring skills and knowledge together to address complex tasks. We investigate the impact of specific OVT features on the amount of contributions they generate. We test our hypotheses on data collected from 221 projects from Peer-to-Patent, a project designed to solicit contributions from OVTs. Finally, through two experimental studies, chapter 5 explores the effects of stakeholder cocreation activities on consumers' adoption of new products.