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Business incubators: the impact of their support

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Citation

Samaeemofrad, N. (2021, June 17). *Business incubators: the impact of their support*. *SIKS Dissertation Series*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3188575>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Issue Date: 2021-06-17

A New Technology-Based Firm (NTBF) is a significant enabler of job creation and a driver of the economy through stimulating innovation. In the last two decades, we have seen an enormous development of the NTBFs. Science and technology policymakers tend to endorse the formation of NTBFs via providing proper conditions for them to generate more economic growth within their territory. However, the liability of smallness, newness, and weak networking ties are three important obstacles in the early stages of an NTBF's lifecycle. They are a threat to the development process of any NTBFs. Consequently, there is a high rate of failure among NTBFs.

A remedy to avoid these failures is in using the support and resources by Business Incubators (BIs). BIs provide supportive services (e.g., administrative and finance-related support, and networking) to promote the NTBFs capabilities and to help them address their liabilities.

So far, there is almost no reliable evidence on the effectiveness of BIs on the performance of NTBFs. Therefore, in this thesis, we aim (1) to identify the supportive activities by BIs and, (2) to understand to what extent the supports by them have a serious impact on the performance of their NTBFs. Building on qualitative and quantitative research methods, a model to measure the impact of support by BIs on the performances of NTBFs is developed, and tested among Dutch and German NTBFs. The research results provide practical guidelines for the management teams of the incubators, which can increase the effectiveness of their performances.

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