

Trust and the Choice of Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms in Clusters

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of trust on the use of knowledge transfer mechanisms of cluster firms by deriving hypotheses from a relational governance perspective. Specifically, we analyze the influence of trust on the use of high information-rich (HIR) knowledge transfer mechanisms in cluster relationships. Based on the relational view of governance, trust influences the choice of knowledge transfer mechanisms of the cluster partners. We develop the following hypotheses: If trust reduces relational risk, more trust reduces the firms' use of HIR-knowledge transfer mechanisms. If trust increases knowledge sharing between the cluster partners, it increases the firms' use of HIR-knowledge transfer mechanisms. In addition, interorganizational experience moderates the relationship between trust and the use of knowledge transfer mechanisms. We test the hypotheses by using data from the Italian textile and fashion sector.

Keywords

Knowledge transfer mechanisms, trust, relational view of governance, cluster relationships

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