Individual dynamic managerial capabilities: Influence over environmental and social commitment under a gender perspective

Marian Buil-Fabregà, María del Mar Alonso-Almeida, Llorenç Bagur-Femenías

Abstract

The current business market is characterized by rapid and continuous changes. Companies should adapt to new situations to guarantee sustainable development. Managers need to have capabilities to understand the new environment’s requirements. Managers’ individual dynamic capabilities (IDC) help them face these unpredictable changes in the market. However, few authors have analysed individual dynamic capabilities to ensure business sustainability. This study aims to shed light on the relationship between a manager’s IDC and business sustainability from a gender perspective. A survey of 339 managers was conducted, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to study the impact of the relationship. The results show that managers’ individual dynamic capabilities help them detect changes in the market earlier and promote a greater social and environmental commitment from those managers. In addition, significant differences in the environmental and social commitment between men and women were found. Therefore, this paper first provides advice for developing business sustainability to provide an advantage for organizations. Second, individual dynamic managerial capabilities appear to be important for promoting sustainability. Finally, another step in the construction of gender and sustainability is provided. Thus, this paper provides useful empirical evidence for managerial practice from a strategic management viewpoint.

1. Introduction

In the current economic environment, consumers reward more socially and environmentally responsible companies (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011). This forces companies to adapt to these new requirements in their environment (Smallbone et al., 2012; Chofreh et al., 2014; Edgeman and Eskildsen, 2014). Because the lead managers must adapt to the new environment, they should also adopt new capabilities (Augier and Teece, 2009; Di Stefano et al., 2010; Teece, 2012; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2015a).

The literature developed thus far on dynamic capabilities focuses on investigating how companies develop dynamic skills that allow them to obtain long-term sustainability and competitive advantages. Thus, studies have focused on the nature of these capabilities (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2010; Augier and Teece, 2008; Easterby-Smith et al., 2009), the results (Helfat, 1997; Zott, 2003), the processes required to carry them out (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Zahra et al., 2006; Zollo and Winter 2002), the recurrent environments (Aragon-Correa and Sharma, 2003; Helfat and Martin, 2015), and their relationship to innovation and entrepreneurship (Teece, 2007; Augier and Teece, 2009; Pitelis and Teece, 2010; Salazar and Peláez, 2011; Teece, 2012; Al-Ali and Teece, 2014; Lanza and Passarelli, 2014).

However, in the case of dynamics at the individual level, it is not clear what these capabilities provide. The literature on individual dynamic capabilities (IDC) is scarce, as Helfat and Martin (2015) note, and more so in the case of experimental research. In fact, only one article that discusses this issue from an empirical perspective was found (Wilden et al., 2013). These authors analysed the impact of dynamic capabilities proposed by Teece (2012) on the financial performance of the company using SEM. In this framework, we conduct the present research on the influence of IDC in the new contextual framework (environmental), where consumers...
reward companies’ social and environmental responsibility. This work analyses this situation from the framework of individual dynamic skills and from a gender perspective. These findings show that IDC help managers observe the market and be alert and detect earlier changes in the environment. Those managers with IDC are more committed to social and environmental issues.

The rest of the article is organized as follows. Section 2 is a review of the literature related to dynamic individual abilities and social and environmental commitment. Section 3 describes the methods used in the empirical study and the results obtained. Section 4 presents a discussion. This article ends with conclusions based on empirical analysis and recommendations for future research.

2. Literature review

2.1. Managerial individual dynamic capabilities and environmental and social commitment

In today’s dynamic environment, which is characterized by continuous and unpredictable changes, managers of enterprises require new skills to successfully manage and ensure the company’s long-term sustainability (Helfat and Martin, 2015). Several authors have highlighted some of the new skills required. Augier and Teece (2009) defined these skills as the recognition of opportunities and leadership, whereas McKelvie and Davidson (2009) defined them as the ability to generate ideas and create disruptions in the market and the innovation to develop new products and markets.

Teece (2012) stresses the importance of the manager’s role in the company’s transformation in changing environments. In these cases, dynamic capabilities become competencies of an individual (manager) that are defined as sensing (identification and evaluation of opportunities), seizing (carrying out the identified opportunity to create value) and transforming (continued innovation). Wilden et al. (2013), Lanza and Passarelli (2014) and Leih et al. (2014) identify these same powers as manager capabilities to ensure business success in the long term.

Carattoli (2013) proposes research focused on the relationship between dynamic search capabilities and other constructs, especially those that are relevant to make sustainable links to certain environmental company measures and the company’s relationship with the environment (Adner and Helfat, 2003; Augier and Teece, 2009; Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011; Wilden et al., 2013). Other authors (Helfat et al., 2007; Hendry et al., 2010) consider the leaders’ strategic thinking in companies as a powerful individual capability to understand and adapt to changes in order to bring innovation to the market. For these reasons, as Calabrese and Costa (2015) noted, strategic thinking of managers is considered a possible driver for sustainability development.

The sustainability of a company refers to the transformation of business models oriented towards purely economic objectives where, in addition to economic sustainability, another model incorporates environmentally and socially aware criteria into the overall strategy (Larson, 2000; Kyrö, 2001; Strohotte and Wüstenhagen, 2005; Cohen and Winn, 2007; Cohen et al., 2008; Van Passel et al., 2009; Alonso-Almeida and Bremser, 2014; Buil-Fabrega et al., 2016), Tata and Prasad (2015) state that sustainability consists of three categories, environmental, social and human, that are influenced by the perceptions and beliefs of humans. Environmental sustainability refers to the environmental management of enterprises to maintain the natural ecosystem through actions such as reducing pollution, consumption and the ecological footprint (Andersen and Skjoett-Larsen, 2009). Social sustainability focuses on social impacts and human rights (Bansal, 2005), improving social welfare and promoting more responsible companies through the reduction of social inequalities, improving quality of life and concern for the common good. A third category of sustainability that is under investigation is human sustainability, a reference to all the members who make up the organization. Human sustainability refers to how the company processes influence the physical and mental development of the organization’s members and involves practices such as the conditions and hours of work or the provision of benefits to members, such as medical coverage. Therefore, according to Tata and Prasad (2015), beliefs and perceptions about sustainability lead to the implementation of major environmental, social and human initiatives in the company to safeguard the environment and help society.

According to both Schaltegger and Wagner (2011) and Tata and Prasad (2015), the introduction of social goals and environmentally responsible managers facilitates sustainable development over the long term for companies, with positive effects on customers and society in a coordinated manner. IDC facilitate this process by allowing the combination of resources to create value and contribute to sustainable development (Augier and Teece, 2008; Teece, 2012; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2017). Some authors (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011; Garriga and Mele, 2013) have identified the social and ethical values of managers who manage corporate sustainability through social and environmental innovations. Examples of social engagement management are the process of ethical decision making (Petrick and Quinn, 2001; Adner and Helfat, 2003) and the development of appropriate key stakeholder relations: employees, customers, suppliers and society (Harrison and St. John, 1996; Hillman and Keim, 2001). Therefore, it is expected that the manager’s IDC contribute to social and environmental business momentum in order to make them socially and environmentally responsible. In light of the above contributions, the following hypotheses are made:

H1. Individual dynamic capabilities of the manager have a direct and positive impact on their social commitment.

H2. Individual dynamic capabilities of the manager have a direct and positive effect on their commitment to the environment.

2.2. Managerial individual dynamic capabilities and gender

IDC are a new field of research. To date, there is no evidence from studies about the impacts on a company where the effect of the dynamic capabilities of a manager committed to social and environmental commitment is analysed from a gender perspective. The literature to date has studied leadership or management of an enterprise, considering women as an “engine change” (Cohen and Huffman, 2007), or the perception of women and their impact on the social and environmental aspects of the company. A consensus in the previous literature attributes to men a dominant leadership style in the company characterized by authoritarianism, with an eagerness for power and status and an orientation towards economic performance (Godoy and Mladinic, 2009). By contrast, women are associated with transformational leadership based on social values, interpersonal relations, welfare and empathy for others (Rudman and Glick, 2001; Bird and Brush, 2002; Eagly et al., 2003; Eagly and Carli, 2007; Aygün et al., 2008; Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010).

In addition, Askehave and Zethsen (2014) establish a third type of leadership that both men and women adopt depending on the environment and the social context in which they operate (Billing, 2011). This type of leadership is a mixed dominant leadership and is transformational. In this case, men and women are similar in terms of management models and leadership carried out in enterprises.
دریافت فوری
متن کامل مقاله

امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات