

Identity of Entrepreneurs in the Evolution of a New Organizational Form: The Emergence and Growth of eBook Publishers Population in Korea

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The current paper examines the role of the identity of entrepreneurs in the emergence and evolution of a new organizational form by empirically analyzing the evolution of eBook publishers in Korea from 1996 to 2011. Drawing on the recently developed identity-based theory of organizational form in the organizational ecology literature, we test hypotheses on the effects of focused and diffused organizational identities on organizational founding in an emergent organizational population. The results of our empirical analysis that tested three hypotheses about a positive relationship between focused identity and form emergence and negative relationships between diffused (horizontal and vertical) identity and form emergence largely supported the argument of identity-based entrepreneurship. General implications are discussed.

Keywords : *Entrepreneurship, Organizational form, Organizational Identity, Focused Identity, Diffused Identity, eBook publishing*

I. Introduction

This paper focuses on the identity of entrepreneurs who adopt a new organizational form despite non-trivial risk from an organizational ecology perspective. We empirically examine the effects of the organizational identity of entrepreneurs who adopt a new organizational form on the subsequent evolution of the form in the setting of Korean eBook publishers from 1996 to 2011. For this purpose, we draw heavily on the identity-based theory of organizational ecology which has been recently developed and rapidly dif-

fused in the field of macro organization theory (Hsu and Hannan, 2005).

One of the essential characteristics of entrepreneurship is risk taking in terms of action timing (Georgellis, Joyce, and Woods, 2000; McMullen and Shepherd, 2006; Sarasvathy, 2001; Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). Most of the entrepreneurs are first-movers contrasted with majority followers. They enter uncertain new markets, adopt unproven innovations, and utilize unfamiliar new technologies, far earlier than the rest, which unavoidably incurs significant risk (Shane, 2004; York and

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Venkatraman, 2010). Among various risky actions that entrepreneurs take, the adoption of a new organizational form would be one of the most hazardous ones. The literature of organizational ecology vividly illustrates the serious hazard of risky entrepreneurial action especially involving a new organizational form in terms of density dependence and liability of newness (Hannan and Freeman, 1977; 1989).

Since the identity of an organization and the identity of its entrepreneur are nearly indistinguishable in early periods of organizational lifecycle, the characteristics of the entrepreneur's identity are reflected in various dimensions of organizational identity (Hannan and Freeman, 1977; 1989; Kalantaridis, 2004). Therefore, the choice of an organizational form in founding or new niche entry is strongly influenced by the identity of the entrepreneur (Hannan and Freeman, 1989; Gartner, Shaver, Gatewood, and Katz, 1994). Therefore, as long as the choice of an organizational form is concerned, organizational identity and entrepreneurial identity can be used interchangeably.

Then how a new organizational form emerges and is institutionalized despite the high risk? This question about entrepreneurship in the emergence of a new organizational form naturally leads us to a more fundamental question of form emergence. When and where does a new organizational form emerge? This question has drawn enormous attention from scholars of organizational ecology, economics, institutional sociology, and strategic management among others (Romanelli, 1991). Organizational ecologists argued that diversity of environment and changes in resource space determine whether a new organizational form will evolve (Hannan and Freeman, 1977, 1987, 1989; Barnett and Carroll, 1987; McPherson and Smith-Lovin, 1988; Barnett, 1990). Others demonstrated that emergence of new forms of organization may result from random variation from everyday activities within organizations, such as competence elements or routines (McKelvey, 1982; McKelvey and Aldrich, 1983; Nelson and Winter, 1982). Despite considerable efforts

of organizational scholars from various research streams, the issue of evolution of new organizational form or industries has not been fully addressed (Driori, Ellis, and Shapira, 2013).

The reason why the question is still largely unresolved may relate to the fact that there is no consensus of usage of the term organizational form. Organizational theorists and sociologists with various theoretical orientations have defined organizational or social forms in different ways (Romanelli, 1991). Overarching aim of existing literatures at best is to group, in one way or another, organizational or social entities into meaningful categories based on similarities and differences. In an attempt to theoretically clarify the form concept, organizational ecologists recently proposed that organizational form be defined in terms of organizational identity (Pólos, Hannan, and Carroll, 2000). This paper aims to explicate the social process of emergence of a new organizational form drawing on the concept of organizational identity.

Technological innovations often open up possibilities that new forms of organization emerge (Schumpeter, 1950). One of the recent examples that technological innovations have changed the ways of combining resources in existing industries is eBook publication. We trace the evolution of Korean eBook publishing industry in an attempt to figure out the role of organizational identity in the form emergence process. To meet this goal, we studied founding events of Korean eBook publishers from 1996 to 2011. We argue that organizational identity with high focus plays positive role in the emergence of a new organizational form, while diffused identity has negative effect on the evolutionary process.

II. Theory

2.1 Concept and Dynamics of Organizational Form

Studying organizational form, organiza-

tional and social researchers from different research streams have used the term 'organizational form' in diverse ways (Stinchcomb, 1965; Pólos et al., 2000). In her review of researches on evolution of new organizational form, Romanelli (1991) distinguished three approaches, namely organizational genetics view (e.g. McKelvey 1982; McKelvey and Aldrich, 1983; Nelson and Winter, 1982), an environmental conditioning view (e.g. Stinchcomb, 1965; Brittain and Freeman, 1980; Hannan and Freeman, 1989; Romanelli, 1989; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990), and an emergent social systems view (e.g. Van de Ven and Garud, 1989). She stated that concept of form widely differs from one research to another. However, the one common factor of researches on form is that all of them aim at yielding meaningful groupings of organizations or entities based on similarities and differences.

There are two theoretically opposite stances on grouping strategy (Romanelli, 1991). One is feature-, or taxonomy-, based approach and the other is boundary-based approach. (Romanelli, 1991; Pólos et al., 2000). In feature-based approach, organizational form is identified by carefully investigating common characteristics, or core features, of a group of organizations. Weber's (1924) analysis of rational-legal bureaucracy is one of the most renowned examples of the feature-based approach. In his specification, an organization is regarded as rational-legal bureaucratic system if it exhibits core features such as professional expertise in evaluating abstract rationalized codes, impersonal exercise of authority, reliance on written rules and files, bureaucratic employment as a career of full-time work, office separated from the private sphere, and compensation by salary (Pólos et al., 2000). In a similar vein, McKelvey (1982) underlined the importance of formulating a general classification scheme upon which broad range of industries, field, or populations can be analyzed.

On the contrary, suggesting that organizational forms can be recognized by studying normative order of populations as well as

formal structure, Hannan and Freeman (1977, 1989) argued that defining organizational form depends heavily on researchers' interests and purposes. They opposed the idea of utilizing fixed rules or universal typology, in that distinctions among organizational or social entities are not as clear-cut as they are in biotic evolution. Rather, categorizing organizations involves the process in which socially meaningful boundaries are created, are maintained and changed. Consequently, they defined organizational form in terms of clarity and strength of boundaries. In this approach, forms are perceived by examining social networks, technological change, closed flows of personnel among a set of organizations, and changes in patterns of resource flows (McKendrick, Jaffee, Carroll, and Khessina, 2003).

Pólos et al. (2000) pushed the discourse on organizational form and refined the concept. They pointed out that both feature-based and boundary-based approaches have limitations of failing to link organizational form with organizational identity. By integrating findings of empirical researches of their own and of others (Zuckerman, 1999, 2000; Ruef, 2000), they demonstrated that identifying organizational forms involve social and cultural typifications, which are agreed-upon classifications of entities into types, and that organizational identity enables such classification schemes to be established among social agents.

2.2 Identity-Based Approach to Organizational Form

Pólos et al. (2000) defined organizational form in relation to organizational identity. They conceptualized organizational identity as social code, which implies the notion both of cognitive recognition and of imperative standing. The term 'code' can be understood as (1) as a set of signals, as in the "genetic code" in the former case, and as (2) a set of rules of conduct, as in the "penal code" in the latter case. Social codes constrain the range of properties - i.e. features or relations

- that an entity can legitimately possess. Violation of default social codes by an entity results in devaluation by relevant actors. Although organizational identity code can be enforced by insiders of organizations, codes recognized and valued by external agents are of more importance in the form emergence process. Because organizational or social forms draw on typification and classification by relevant social actors, only those codes enforced by external agents can obtain the form status.

Organizational form is defined as default external identity code with at least $v(\phi)$ -many entities. Pólos, Hannan, and Carroll (2000) adopted density-dependence legitimation process (Hannan and Carroll, 1992; Carroll and Hannan, 2000) in explaining how identity code attains the status of organizational form. Density-dependence legitimation process demonstrates that with increase in the number of organizations sharing the same external identity, the identity code obtains taken-for-grantedness among relevant actors. In other words, from founding of the first organization with certain identity until the number of organizations reaches some ceiling, joining of new organizations in the population itself has positive effect on legitimation of the identity. According to empirical researches, ceilings of legitimation process differ from population to population. Pólos et al. (2000) called the ceiling "*a form-specific application number*, denoted as $v(\phi)$ which gives the number of entities to which a social identity must apply for the identity to gain the standing of form (Pólos et al., 2000: 17)." This conception of organizational form indicates that a population, initiated when a new socially enforced external identity came into existence, may fail to attain form status if the number of organizations in the population is not sufficient enough to exceed $v(\phi)$. In this paper, we examine the emergence of a new organizational form in relation to organizational identity.

2.3 Focused Identity and New Form Emergence

Linking organizational identity to organizational form concept, Pólos et al. (2000) redefined population. Organizational ecologists previously defined population as "the form as it exists or is realized within a specified system (Hannan and Freeman, 1977: 936)." According to this definition, population is instantiation of organizational form in a certain point in time and space. On the other hand, Pólos et al. (2000) distinguished population from form when they conceptualized that organizational form evolves from population. This definition allows the possibility that some populations fail to develop into organizational forms while others attain the form status.

Observation by McKendrick and Carroll (2001) supports that distinction between newly defined concepts of population and that of organizational forms is necessary or even critical when understanding form emergence process. Despite the substantial number of organizations in the population and existence of formal institutions, it seemed that disk array producers were not taken-for-granted by relevant social actors. Relevant outsiders such as security firm's market analysts did not consider "disk array" a category. Even market insiders referred to their own business as "storage," "storage subsystems," "RAID (Redundant Array of Independent Disks)," "disk arrays," and "network attached storage" (McKendrick and Carroll, 2001).

Based on this finding, McKendrick et al. (2003) presented identity-based argument about the reason why disk array producers did not gain the standing of organizational form. Attention from external agents, perception and expectation about organizations bearing the code, and sanctioning rules in case of code violation are prerequisites for an identity code to attain the status of organizational form. McKendrick et al. (2003) proposed that the social process formulating such attention, perception and expectation, and

sanctioning rules are facilitated when organizations within a population have more focus on the common identity code for the following reasons (McKendrick et al., 2003: 67): (1) “Both insiders and outsiders will be more likely to recognize and identify something distinctive. So, focus increases salience.” (2) “The greater homogeneity of organizations with focused identities implies that form boundaries and exclusion rules are simpler. Simpler boundary rules make policing or sanctioning possible.” (3) “Salience and homogeneity provide the seedbed for generating solidarity and organizing for self-promotion and defense.” They adopt empirical strategy from Pólos et al. (2000)’s work and integrated their focused identity argument with density-dependence legitimation process. The results revealed that density of organizations with perceptually focused identity, not density of all organizations in the population, has a positive effect on organizational founding rate - i.e. emergence of a new organizational form.

Baron (2004) provided a more refined concept of focus, which he considered as one of the dimensions of organizational identity along with sharpness/resonance and authenticity. According to Hsu and Hannan (2005: 481), the sharpness of an organizational form refers to “a form’s distance from other forms within industry-space as well as the degree of similarities of the organizations that belong the form.” There, the higher the sharpness of a form, the stronger the similarity of organizations belonging to the form, as well as the bigger the form’s difference from other forms. He defined focus as the extent to which “an enterprise can easily broaden (or weaken) its offerings without running the risk of alienating its core clientele or being viewed by them as illegitimate (Baron, 2004: 11).” Moreover, organizations with a focused identity can enjoy the merits of simplicity, since they can simply define themselves with a category or naming (Zuckerman, Kim, Ukanwa, and Von Rittmann, 2003). Therefore, the increase of organizations with a focused identity en-

hances the legitimacy of the form within the population increase (McKendrick et al., 2003).

He asserted that the higher the focus of an organization, the stronger its organizational identity. In this regard, we infer that as the number of entities with high level of focus in organizational identity rises, the likelihood that the identity strongly appeal to external agents is increased, as well as the perceptions, expectations, and sanctioning rules of the identity. Therefore, we predict that increase in density of organizations with focused identity accelerates the form emergence process of a newly initiated population.

Hypothesis 1: Organizational founding rates of a newly initiated organizational population will rise with the increases in the density of organizations with focused identity.

2.4 Diffused Identity and New Form Emergence

With diffused identity, we refer to cases when an organization does not solely focus its activities to a focal population, but straddles several populations simultaneously. While effect of focused identity on organizational founding rate was hypothesized and tested in existing literatures, the relationship between diffused identity and evolution of a new organizational form has been rarely analyzed. We argue that investigating the role of organizations with diffused identity in an emergent population is no less important because organizational form evolves from environment consisted of interrelated organizational populations (Romanelli, 1991).

While a focused identity involves a few simple dimensions, a diffused identity has a complex, multivalent, and high-dimensional code (Hsu and Hannan, 2005). Therefore, while organizations with a diffused identity may enjoy flexibility, they at the same time experience difficulty in legitimation as a form due to the flexibility.

When organizations with diffused identity, spanning several populations - i.e. several different categories - prevail in a focal population, existing structure of interrelated population becomes unstable and boundaries among population categories blur. Researches on boundary spanning at category level generally reported negative consequences of fuzzy category boundaries (Hannan, 2010). As contrast among categories increases, external agents tend to perceive a category more coherently and to have consensus on meaning of a category (Hannan, Pólos, and Carroll, 2007). Conversely, when the distinction among categories becomes fuzzy, an organization rarely conforms to the social classification schemata of external agents. That is because agents themselves find it difficult to agree upon meanings of each category. For instance, Negro, Hannan, and Rao (2010) studied wine industry and found that widespread straddling among wine style-categories blurred the boundaries of a category and lowered its social appeal. Likewise, Carroll, Feng, Le Mens, and McKendrick (2010) investigated tape-drive producers' portfolio of recording formats and revealed that the average contrast or sharpness of a firm's portfolio increases the mortality rate.

Increased density of organizations with diffused identity decreases the level of sharpness or resonance. Sharpness of organizational identity is high when entities within a category are homogeneous and those in different categories are heterogeneous. Organizations or organizational identities are said to have resonance when they "capture or activate powerful distinctions along social, ethnic, religious, economic, political, and cultural lines" (Baron, 2004: 11). When organizational identity is sharper and more resonant, the identity is strong because consensus of how to recognize organizations with the identity, what to expect from them, and how to sanction if they violate the identity code can be easily drawn. In this respect, if diffused identity is widespread among organizations in an emerging population, category boundaries of interrelated populations

are blurred and, thus, the population is less likely to be legitimated enough to obtain the status of organizational form.

Hypothesis 2: *Organizational founding rates of a newly initiated organizational population will fall with the increases in the density of organizations with diffused identity.*

It is noteworthy that relationships of categories may not be homogenous in interrelated populations level, or organizational communities level in Carroll (1984)'s term. That is, a focal newly emerging population may relate to other relevant populations in diverse ways. For example, eBook publishers either directly or indirectly interact with organizations in relevant populations of which the nature of relationship with eBook publishers vary. Printed book publishers population plays fundamentally the same role of providing contents in the value chain.

In this study, we view those printed-book publishers which entered eBook as the category of horizontal spanning to related niches, since they simply diversified distribution channels of the same contents from conventional printed books to newly introduced eBooks. That is, we argue that printed book publishing and eBook publishing share much in identity dimensions, since both are based on the production and sales of books. These organizations were already book publishers even before they entered eBook market. On the other hand, the category of vertical spanning involves those organizations which used to occupy positions different from that of eBook publishers in vertical value chains such as dedicated distributors, telecommunication companies, and software solution providers. They were not book publishers until they entered eBook market. In this regard, between the two types of organizations with a diffused identity, vertical spanners' difference from de novo eBook publishers with a focused identity is likely to be greater than that of horizontal spanners.

By taking this into account, we distinguish the types of relationship, horizontal and vertical, that a focal emerging population establishes in community of populations and hypothesize as follows.

H2a: Organizational founding rates of a newly initiated organizational population will fall with the increases in the density of organizations that span horizontally related categories.

H2b: Organizational founding rates of a newly initiated organizational population will fall with the increases in the density of organizations that span vertically related categories.

III. Method

3.1 Empirical Setting

Although general public, industry insiders, and relevant outsiders share understanding of what eBooks are, there seems to be no consensus about the clear definition of the term and entities in different business arenas or distant geographic areas use the label in diverse ways. While International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) defines eBooks as contents delivered in digitalized format through CD-ROM, PDA, or eBook readers or viewers, National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the United States regards eBooks as e-reader systems or devices which enable digital contents to be displayed in similar format as printed book. Korea Electronic Publishing Association (KEPA) defines eBooks as publishable contents that are written, stored, and delivered in digitalized formats. Moreover, eBooks, electronic publishing, digital publishing, electronic publishing, and digital books are used as interchangeable terms (Lee, Kwak, Park, and Moon, 2010).

This lack of consensus implies that eBook publishers population is in its early days, not taken for granted by social actors and still in its legitimation process. More interestingly, some even argue for a need to redefine

“books” or “publishing” in accordance with the advent of eBooks. That is, traditional meaning of a category called “book,” which indicates information or contents assembled, produced, and distributed in printed copies, needs to be broadened since contents are freed from physical configuration and distributed in intangible eBook formats.

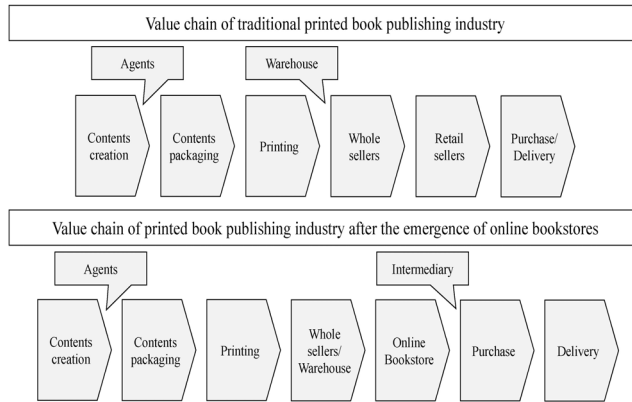
eBook publishers population has emerged from environment in which diverse types of populations are interconnected. The value chain of printed book publishing industry, consisting of authors, printed book publishers, packaging companies, printing houses, and distributors, used to be relatively monotonous and linear. Even after the emergence of online book sellers which brought about dramatic changes in publishing industry, the value chain itself largely remained the same. However, evolution of eBook publishing caused radical changes in the pattern of inter-populations relationships.

First, new populations establish business in relation to publishing industry. Hardware manufacturers produce eBook readers, solution providers develop software and platforms upon which eBooks are produced, purchased, viewed, and managed, and telecommunication companies provide mobile telecommunication services through which eBooks are downloaded. Moreover, relationships of the existing value chain of publishing industry become complicated. Upon diversifying into eBook business, some printed book publishers not only convert or produce contents into electronic formats but also launch eBook platform in order to interact directly with end-users without relying on distributors. Authors become able to release publication through self-publishing services of eBook platforms without dealing with publishers who traditionally handled editing, printing, warehousing, and marketing of printed books. Accordingly, amateur writers as well as professional writers can publish their own contents, expanding the pool of potential authors. Distributors, mainly on- and offline book sellers, run eBook platforms, which provide handling of payments, support for

digital conversion, and establishment of a digital content system. Some of them aggressively look for creative users, who will

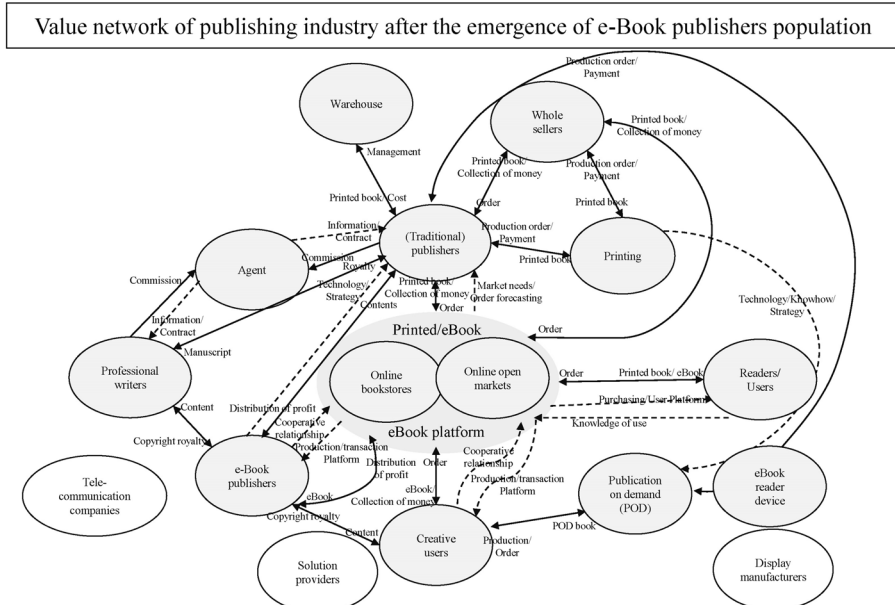
use self-publishing service, as well as contents of which copyright is in public domain so that they can convert contents into digital

Figure 1
Traditional Value Chain of Printed Book Publishing Industry



* Chang and Gong (2011).

Figure 2
Value Network of Publishing Industry after the Emergence of eBook Publishers Population



* Gray oval: Participants/relevant actor; Arrow: Interaction; Solid line: Tangible value (e.g. product, service, profit, etc.); Dotted line: Intangible value (e.g. knowledge, information, strategy, knowhow, etc.) (Allee, 2002)
* White oval: Relevant actors that were not included in the original Allee's (2002) figure (i.e. our addition).

version and sell on the eBook platform. Distributors running platforms even affiliate with telecommunication companies or hardware manufactures in an attempt to increase market power. Telecommunication companies introduce their own eBook platforms. Consequently, linear value chain of publishing industry has been transformed into complex network of interrelated populations as illustrated in Figures 1 and Figures 2.

With this change in value chain, political dynamics of interrelated populations become complicated. Book sellers and telecommunication companies view eBook industry as a new source of revenue and are vigorously expanding business in this arena. Publisher population composed of small number of large companies and large number of small organizations, such as one man business, fear that the market will be dominated by agents with enormous financial resources or established reputation such as huge bookstores or mobile telecommunication companies. Conflicting interests are expressed in the current situation of intense debates over whether eBook digital management should be reserved for publishers or for platform providers, whether revenue collection system should be established in favor of publishers, and whether eBooks should be produced in compatible formats so that contents purchased in one platform can be read in another.

Korean eBook publishing industry began to form in the mid-1990s. Initially, online genrefiction communities played a major part. Amateur authors uploaded novels they wrote and community members read or downloaded them. A few years later, specialized platforms on which financial transactions could take place were introduced. Contrary to the expectation of industry experts that eBook industry would expand at striking rate, the industry maintained steady but slow growth, the reasons of which were attributed to the lead of industry by hardware manufacturers and consequently, the lack of quality contents due to the low market entry rate of printed book publishers concerned

of cannibalization. But a new phase began in the late 2000s as the consumption of cultural contents, particularly music and films, via online became more and more common with diffusion of specialized devices in reading eBooks, such as Kindle by Amazon, and of general purpose mobile devices such as iPhones and iPads. Korean government announced ‘Development Program for the Electronic Publication Industry’ in 2010 and plans to develop and employ digital textbooks and readers.

eBook publishers population is emerging, accompanying radical changes in the way of organizing resources in publishing industry. It has even stirred up social and cultural debates about redefining “books” and “publishing.” In this sense, the setting of eBook publishing industry is suitable for studying the evolution of a new organizational form in relation to organizational identity. Especially since eBook publishers in Korea are a newly emerging population in which diverse new forms are frequently tried and disbanded, they may serve as an excellent empirical setting observe the dynamics of new organizational forms. The following sections describe how we gathered the necessary data and measured variables to test our hypotheses in the empirical context of Korean eBook publishing industry.

3.2 Empirical Data

The empirical setting of this study is Korean eBook publishers population. To examine the effects of organizational identity on the process of form emergence process, we analyzed the dataset containing information on Korean eBook publishers as well as organizations in relevant populations. We gathered information on eBook publishers from records of eBooks certified by Korea Electronic Publishing Association (KEPA). In order to identify whether an eBook publisher possesses focused or diffused identity, we utilized data obtained from Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Transformation of Korea (MCST).

First, we collected records of published

eBooks from KEPA website (www.kepa.or.kr). KEPA operates eBook certification system to manage information of published eBooks systematically. Publishers providing information to KEPA are given VAT exemption in return. Although the certification system began in 2006, KEPA also gathered information of eBooks published earlier than the launch of the system. Since reporting publication of contents is no requirement of law or regulation, the certification records do not cover the whole eBooks ever published, particularly those are not targeted at mass distribution. But we confirmed that KEPA archives the most extensive records of published eBooks via phone interview with the person in charge of certification system at KEPA. We web-crawled records of eBooks that had ever certified until 2011. Some of the eBooks were reported to be published earlier than the 1990s. Some of these cases seemed to be coded by publishers. In others cases, publishers regarded the time when they had first owned the contents in digital formats as eBook publication date. As most of reports, journals of publishing industry, and articles by field experts indicate that Korean eBook publishing industry began in 1996 or 1997 and the KEPA personnel stated that information on eBooks published in the late 1990s and on are reliable, we only used eBook records since 1996. We aggregated eBook level data into organization level by coding the date of first eBook publication of each publisher. The total number of founding events was 934.

Second, we also collected information on publishers from website provided by the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Transformation of Korea (<http://61.104.76.20/html/>). Like printed book publishers, eBook publishers must be registered at MCST in order to publish contents. We coded the date of registration of each eBook publishers. We also included the date of status change and that of closure if publishers went out of business. Sometimes, we could not find eBook publishers that went through certification system of KEPA in registration records of

MCST. Because coding independent variables of focused and diffused organizational identity require matching between KEPA and MCST data, those publishers without MCST records were unfortunately excluded from the dataset. Due to these omissions, the number of total organizations entered eBook publishing between 1996 and 2011 was 707.

Finally, we gathered information on organizations in populations that are interrelated with eBook publishers population, such as eBook reader manufacturers, eBook distributors, telecommunication companies, and developers of Digital Right Management, eBook conversion technology, and other solutions, to which we refer to “outsiders” in the later part of this paper. There was no comprehensive list of or information on these populations. So we listed and coded information of organizations by looking up market reports, eBook conferences program books, consultative groups such as KEPA and KPC (Korea Publishing Contents), major journals of publishing industry and Yearbook of Publishing Industry by MCST and by visiting websites of each company.

3.3 Measurement

3.3.1 Dependent Variable

Founding Events: There can be various ways to measure the emergence and growth of an organizational population in addition to founding rate. For example, one may consider the rate of entry or changes in the gross valuation of firms. Nevertheless, we chose founding rate as our dependent variable, because the population of Korean eBook publishers has a high frequency of founding events that are easy to observe. The dependent variable, founding event, was measured by counting the number of organizations that entered the eBook publishers population by publishing the first eBook between quarter $t-1$ and quarter t . The level of analysis in this study is population-quarter, 1996~2011. We employed one quarter lagging for independent and control variables to avoid the possibility of reverse causality.

3.3.2 Independent Variables

Density of Organizations with Focused Identity: Following the lead of McKendrick et al. (2003), we operationalized the organizations with focused identity as publishers whose entry mode to eBook publishing industry was *de novo*. De novo entry refers to the cases that organizations join a focal industry by founding a new entity. Density of de novo eBook publishers is measured by counting the total number of eBook publishers who joined the population by newly founding an organization. To determine whether an eBook publisher is de novo, we compared the date of the first eBook publication of a focal organization in KEPA records and that of registration as a publisher at MCST. We coded an organization as de novo 1) if the first eBook was published within one year since its foundation or 2) if eBook certification date precedes organizational founding. When went out of business, eBook publishers were excluded from counting de novo density.

Density of Organizations with Diffused Identity: Regarding diffused identity, we hypothesized for two different cases. The first case deals with organizations spanning horizontally related categories, while the second is about those straddling vertically related categories.

a) Density of Horizontal-Categories Spanners

Density of horizontal-categories spanners was measured by counting the number of eBook publishers who originally had been printed book publishers that diversified into eBook publishing.

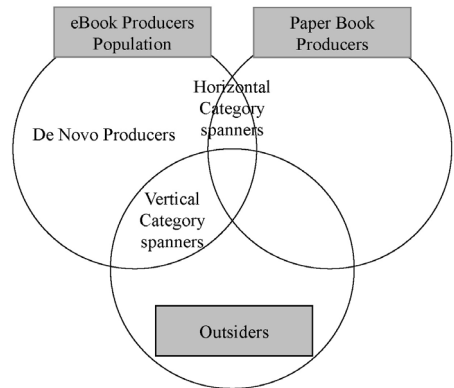
b) Density of Vertical-Categories Spanners

We measured density of vertical-categories spanners by counting the number of organizations that run business both in eBook publishing industry and in relevant areas such as eBook reader manufacturing, solution developing, distributing, and telecommunication services.

Each organization should be counted once at each time period. Consequently, when a

de novo eBook publisher diversifies into another relevant population at period t , we excluded the organization from the de novo publishers population and included it in the vertical-categories spanners population. It is also possible that organizations in outsider population, which consists one of our control variables, diversify into eBook publishing at period t . In this case as well, we subtracted the number of diversified organizations from outsider population and added them to vertical-categories spanners population. In consequence, an organization, at each time period, belongs to only one of the four cases - i.e. three independent variables or one control variable, which is density of outsiders. Figure 3 illustrates independent variables used in this study.

Figure 3
Independent Variables of the Current Study



3.3.3 Control Variables

Outsider Density: As mentioned above, we included density of outsiders in the analysis to control for the effect of growth of populations related to eBook publishers. Outsider density is measured by counting the numbers of organizations that entered eBook related industry such as hardware manufacturers, solution developers, distributors, DRM developing and managing companies, and telecommunication services.

Diffusion of Mobile Devices: As intro-

duction of iPhone and iPad is considered to have largely vitalized eBook market, we controlled for the effect of diffusion of mobile devices. This variable was measured by the number of smart phones in use.

UCI Dummy: We also controlled for the effect of introduction of certification system by KEPA. The association started to assign UCI (Universal Content Identifier) in 2006. We coded UCI dummy by coding 1 for years since 2006.

IV. Statistical Analyses and Results

We ran negative binomial regression in estimating the founding rate of eBook publishers since our dependent variable takes the form of event count. Count outcome takes minimum value of zero and each entry is a discrete number. OLS regression model

with count outcome is inefficient and inconsistent and yields biased estimates.

Poisson regression and negative binomial regression are most widely used to analyze count outcomes. Between the two, negative binomial regression is usually chosen since assumption of Poisson regression that conditional mean and conditional variance are congruent is rarely met in most empirical settings (Hausman, Hall, and Griliches, 1984; Long, 1997). we tested goodness of fit for Poisson regression with ourdataset and the null hypothesis of the test, which is conditional mean equals conditional variance, was rejected (P-value > 0.000). Consequently, we chose negative binomial regression which allows overdispersion.

Table 1 summarizes descriptive statistics for all variables.

Table 2 shows correlations between variables. Dependent variable correlates with in-

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics (n = 63)

| Variable | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|---|---------|-----------|-----|-----|
| Founding events | 10.969 | 15.235 | 0 | 72 |
| Outsider density | 23.234 | 16.395 | 1 | 69 |
| Diffusion of mobile devices | 0.375 | 0.488 | 0 | 1 |
| UCI Dummy | 58.004 | 173.487 | 0 | 872 |
| Density of organizations with focused identity | 166.797 | 125.894 | 2 | 326 |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Horizontal category spanners | 150.125 | 129.821 | 2 | 322 |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Vertical category spanners | 5.672 | 3.559 | 0 | 14 |

Table 2
Pearson Correlations b/w Variables

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| Founding events | | | | | | |
| Outsider density | -0.026 | | | | | |
| Diffusion of mobile devices | -0.202 | 0.642 | | | | |
| UCI Dummy | -0.155 | 0.753 | 0.435 | | | |
| Density of organizations with focused identity | 0.022 | 0.876 | 0.414 | 0.917 | | |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Horizontal categories spanners | -0.268 | -0.214 | 0.084 | 0.334 | -0.011 | |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Vertical categories spanners | -0.305 | 0.065 | 0.303 | 0.440 | 0.255 | 0.614 |

dependent variables in predicted directions. Although theoretical implication and empirical object being measured of each variable was independent, statistical correlations were high. To address the possibility of multicollinearity, we orthogonized two pairs of variables: 1) the density of organizations with focused identity and the density of organizations with diffused identity: horizontal-categories spanners and 2) between the density of outsiders and the density of organizations with diffused identity: vertical-categories spanners. Doing so reduced the correlations of the two pairs of variables close to zero (Choi and Prasa, 1995; Elton and Gruber, 1991; Lee and Makhija, 2009).

Correlations between several pairs of variables are still high. As shown in Table 3, high VIFs of density of organizations with focused identity (27.44) and of UCI dummy (25.9) suggest that regression may suffer from multicollinearity. Regression models with multicollinearity problem still yield best linear unbiased estimates. The problem is that standard errors are very large, often resulting in hypotheses that are not supported. Despite large standard errors, hypothesis 1 of current study was strongly supported while hypothesis 2 was partially supported. In addition to the multicollinearity problem, our dataset is not free from the possibility of autocorrelation. The variance of the error terms being correlated over time is a typical problem of a panel dataset, especially in case of quarterly data.

Table 4 summarizes the result of negative binomial regressions with dataset of Korean

eBook publishers population from 2006 to 2011. Nested models of eight combinations of independent variables were tested for statistical significance. Moreover, as presented in Table 4, we could confirm model fit, since the Log-likelihood of the full model with all independent and control variables was smaller than the baseline model which contained only control variables. Model fits were significant for all models.

Model 1 is the base model which includes only control variables. Model 1 indicates that the control variables, outsider density and diffusion of mobile devices have significant effects on founding rate of eBook publishers when none of the independent variables are considered.

The results of Models 2, 5, 6, and 8 show that density of organization with focused identity has positive and statistically significant effect on founding rate of eBook publishers population as predicted in Hypothesis 1. We hypothesized for two cases of diffused identity in the previous section. The results of models 4, 6, 7, and 8 suggest that density of organizations that span vertically related categories has negative effect on founding rates as predicted in Hypothesis 2b. However, Hypothesis 2a, the negative effect of horizontal-categories spanners, is not supported. The results of Models 3, 5, and 7 indicate negative relationship between density of horizontal-categories spanners and organizational founding rate but the coefficient is not statistically significant. In the full model, Model 8, the effect of density of horizontal-categories spanners on founding rate is not sig-

Table 3
Test for Multicollinearity

| Variable | VIF | 1/VIF |
|---|-------|-------|
| Density of organizations with focused identity | 27.44 | 0.036 |
| UCI Dummy | 25.9 | 0.039 |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Vertical categories spanners | 9.32 | 0.107 |
| Outsider density | 5.05 | 0.198 |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Horizontal categories spanners | 2.52 | 0.397 |
| Diffusion of mobile devices | 1.87 | 0.534 |
| Mean VIF | 12.02 | |

Table 4
ML Estimates of Negative Binomial Models of Founding Rates, 1996 to 2011

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 | Model 8 |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Constants | 2.815 ^{***} (0.228) | 3.024 ^{***} (0.260) | 2.622 ^{***} (0.372) | 2.474 ^{***} (0.258) | 2.737 ^{***} (0.383) | 2.559 ^{***} (0.263) | 2.458 ^{***} (0.364) | 2.597 ^{***} (0.375) |
| Outsider density | 0.688 [*] (0.323) | -0.547 (0.593) | 0.426 (0.515) | 0.193 (0.372) | -0.911 (0.672) | -1.767 (0.628) | 0.172 (0.508) | -1.737 ^{**} (0.662) |
| Diffusion of mobile devices | -0.004 ^{***} (0.001) | -0.002 (0.001) | -0.004 ^{**} (0.001) | -0.002 (0.001) | -0.002 [*] (0.001) | 0.001 (0.002) | -0.002 (0.001) | 0.001 (0.002) |
| UCI Dummy | -0.625 (0.369) | -1.755 ^{**} (0.649) | -0.269 (0.669) | -0.243 (0.397) | -1.225 (0.825) | -1.595 ^{**} (0.576) | -0.213 (0.644) | -1.679 [*] (0.817) |
| Density of organizations with focused identity | | 1.378 [*] (0.619) | | | 1.374 [*] (0.584) | 1.935 ^{***} (0.560) | | 1.957 ^{***} (0.573) |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Horizontal category spanners | | | -0.151 (0.241) | | -0.226 (0.236) | | -0.014 (0.237) | 0.034 (0.234) |
| Density of organizations with diffused identity: Vertical category spanners | | | | -0.476 [*] (0.218) | | -0.717 ^{***} (0.211) | -0.473 [*] (0.225) | -0.727 ^{***} (0.222) |
| Dispersion of parameters | 1.156 | 1.073 | 1.150 | 1.080 | 1.061 | 0.900 | 1.080 | 0.900 |
| Log likelihood | -212.693 | -210.364 | -212.500 | -210.370 | -209.917 | -204.946 | -210.368 | -204.936 |
| Chi square vs. null (constant rate) | 559.940 | 476.800 | 559.140 | 552.810 | 472.950 | 426.360 | 550.980 | 415.030 |
| D.F. | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 |

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.001; *** p < 0.001.
Standard errors are in parentheses; N of observations = 63.

nificant and even the signal of the coefficient is flipped. In summary, the results from the negative binomial regressions strongly support Hypothesis 1 but only partially support Hypothesis 2.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

The evolution of a new organizational form has received growing attention in the field of management studies since organizational scholars have pointed out the issue of the origins of new organizational forms as being largely unaddressed (e.g. Aldrich and Mueller, 1982; Astley, 1985; Fombrun, 1988; Hawley, 1988; Romanelli, 1989; Meyer, 1990). Based on recent theoretical refinement of the concept of organizational form by ecologists (Pólos et al., 2000), we employed identity based approach to study form emergence process. In order to test our argument that focused identity promotes evolution of a new organizational form while diffused identity hinders the form emergence process, we conducted empirical analysis of organizational founding rate with the dataset of Korean eBook publishing industry. The results suggested that organizational founding rate increases with the rise in density of organizations with *de novo* entry mode -i.e. focused identity. On the other hand, hypothesis on diffused identity was only partially supported. When diffused identity was measured by density of vertical-categories spanners, the hypothesized negative effect on organizational founding rate was given robust support. Hypothesis 2b, the effect of organizations spanning horizontally related categories, was not supported.

Partial support for hypothesis on diffused identity may result from high statistical correlations between variables. Although two pairs of highly correlated variables were orthogonalized, problem of multicollinearity was not fully resolved. Thus, large standard errors may have caused coefficient of density of horizontal-categories spanners to be insignificant. Observation from eBook publishing industry suggests another explanation. Articles

about eBook publishing or discussions at industry conferences underline tension between existing publishers and entities that enter the eBook publishing arena by vertical integration, disrupting value chain. Some of eBook and printed book publishers are even anxious that the role of publishers will diminish, if not disappear. On the other hand, conflict between eBook publishers and printed book publishers has rarely been highlighted.

The fact that results of empirical analysis of vertical-categories spanners and horizontal-categories spanners differ is worth theoretical attention. Existing literature on categorization schemes by external agents seems to assume that categories are in the same level or dimension. In contrast, result of the current study suggests that relationships among categories may be multidimensional.

Taking DiMaggio's (1986) grouping of organizations by utilizing structural equivalence concept as an example of categorizing entities based on patterns of interorganizational relations, Pólos et al. (2000) noted that properties from which organizational identity emanates include not only features such as structural arrangement but also relations. When pattern of relationships of an entity is the same as that of another entity in a set of organizations, the two entities are said to be structurally equivalent. In the network structure of interactions among interrelated organizations, structurally equivalent actors are perceived to be more similar than inequivalent cases and even may be in competitive positions. If two populations are horizontally related in value chain of an industry, they are likely to be structurally equivalent in the community of organizational populations level. On the contrary, vertical relationship between two populations may indicate that the two are not equivalent in the network structure. Result of this study signifies the importance of position of a category in the network structure of categories. Future researches may build on this result and shed lights on multidimensional structure of categories.

Another contribution of this paper is linking a community (of organizational populations) level variable to population level phenomena. Among many levels of organization studies, community level seems to draw the least attention from scholars. We believe that this study tapped the expandability of community level research by delineating effect of organizations which straddle population-categories on the form emergence process.

Finally, this study enriches organizational studies by taking publishing industry as an empirical setting of quantitative analysis. Since Coser and Powell (Coser, 1975; Powell, 1978, 1985; Coser, Kadushin, and Powell, 1982) depicted dynamics and changes of publishing industry with exceptionally rich interviews and observations, the industry has hardly been chosen as empirical setting in researches of organizational theories or sociology of organizations literatures. This paper has distinctive value in that it tried empirical analysis on the understudied publishing industry by gathering archival data. Furthermore, whereas existing researches on eBook publishing either illustrate the evolutionary path of eBook platforms (Chang and Gong, 2011; 2012a, 2012b; Kim, 2011) or focused on technological factors of digital rights management or eBook formats, this study attempted to capture industry dynamics surrounding eBook publishers.

Despite various contributions, this paper still contains sufficient limitations. First of all, the dataset used in empirical analysis does not thoroughly cover every eBook publication that ever existed in Korean publishing industry. Publishers who are not attracted by advantage of VAT exemption may produce and distribute eBooks without reporting to KEPA. Obtaining metadata of eBooks is not an easy task because publishers and platforms do not publicly provide the list and sales data of books they manage. If one can assemble information on eBooks distributed through major eBook platforms, more complete investigation of eBook publishing industry would be made possible.

Second, our analysis suffered from statistical factors. High correlations between variables caused significant difficulties in analysis and may have led to partial support for one of the hypotheses. Also, sample size was small. This drew constraint on the number of control variables included in the model.

Another limitation of the current study is the lack of firm level data. In an industry in which majority of participants are small-sized and unlisted, it is hard to get crucial information in firm level. If firm level variables such as financial resources, performance, age, and structural arrangement are available and if more variables at community (of populations) level can be utilized, multi-level analysis of publishing industry would be feasible. Research on the evolution of organizational form with multilevel framework will reveal much more interesting dynamics of interrelated organizations and populations and lead us to a better understanding of the form emergence process.

Received 21 Apr. 2016

Accepted 16 May 2016

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새로운 조직형태의 진화과정에서 나타나는 기업가 정체성: 한국 전자 책 출판 생태계의 발생과 성장을 중심으로

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본 연구는 새로운 조직형태의 발현과 진화 과정에서 나타나는 기업가 정체성(identity)의 역할에 대해서 논의한다. 기업가는 다양한 위험을 감수하면서 새로운 기업을 창출하는 활동을 하게 되는데 그 중에서도 본 연구는 새로운 조직형태의 결정에 미치는 정체성의 영향력에 초점을 맞추고 있다. 특히 본 연구에서는 조직생태학에서 논의되고 있는 정체성이론(identity-based theory)을 기반으로 하여 새로운 조직 형태의 발생에 미치는 조직 정체성의 영향력에 대해 분석하였다. 이에 따라 조직의 집중화 정체성(focused identity)은 새로운 조직의 등장에 긍정적 영향을 미칠 것이며, 확산적 정체성(diffused identity)은 부정적 영향을 미칠 것이라는 가설을 수립하였다. 추가적으로 확산적 정체성을 다시 수평적(horizontal) 정체성과 수직적(vertical) 정체성이라는 두 가지 유형으로 구분하여 이들 두 유형의 정체성이 새로운 조직의 등장에 미치는 차별적 영향력에 대해 논의하였다 이를 위해 1996년부터 2011년까지 한국 전자 책 출판회사를 대상으로 실증분석 하였다.

주제어 : 기업가정신, 조직 형태, 조직 정체성, 집중화 정체성, 확산적 정체성

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