CALL FOR PAPERS

New Venture Team Design in the Digital Age

October 09 - 10, 2024
TUM Campus Heilbronn

IMPORTANT DATES

July 10, 2024
Paper submission deadline
Extended abstracts (max. 1,000 words) OR full papers (between 6,000 and 10,000 words)

July 15, 2024
Paper acceptance notification

October 09-10, 2024
Conference at TUM Campus Heilbronn

EXEMPLARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do digital tools (re)shape collaboration and communication within new venture teams?

- In the context of the digital age, what effects does remote work have on the dynamics, efficiency, and innovation of new venture teams?

- What strategies can promote effective cooperation between AI systems and human team members, thereby augmenting creativity and problem-solving?

- How can we seamlessly integrate AI into new venture teams to bolster decision-making and innovation?

- How does data-centric decision-making shape the strategic foci of these teams?

TUM

Global Center for Family Enterprise

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Submission Link
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Research has increasingly shifted from an individualistic view of the entrepreneur to a focus on new venture teams, thereby recognizing that the pursuance of entrepreneurial endeavors involves collective action (Bird & Zellweger, 2018; Ruef, 2010). Entrepreneurship scholars have investigated new venture team characteristics, such as team member's functional background (Amason, Shrader, & Tompson, 2006), joint prior work experience (Beckman, 2006; Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1990), their educational background (Foo, Sin, & Yiong, 2006; Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007), as well as their social capital (Stam & Elfring, 2008), and how these characteristics are linked to firm-level outcomes like firm performance (Lazar et al., 2022).

The fundamental premise underlying this work is that new venture teams actively shape the trajectory of their ventures through various strategic decisions (Lazar et al., 2020; Wasserman, 2012). These strategic decisions encompass forming teams (Lazar et al., 2021; Ruef, 2010; Ruef, Aldrich, & Carter, 2003), allocating power and tasks within the team (Jung, Vissa, & Pich, 2017; Yang & Aldrich, 2014), and complementing the team with additional employees. Also, in later stages, team composition is very dynamic due to team members' entries and exits (Guenther, Oertel, & Walgenbach, 2016; Ucbasaran, Lockett, Wright, & Westhead, 2003) or through hiring external CEOs (Kulchina & Venancio, 2018). All these strategic decisions—that can be actively shaped by team members—are fundamental elements of the 'team design' (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Stewart, 2006). While we note a general need to advance knowledge on the role of new venture team design in explaining new venture team processes and ultimately firm outcomes, in this year's conference we put additional emphasis on how the role of team design may change in the digital age.

And indeed, the recent emergence of groundbreaking technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, machine learning, and open platforms has been hailed as one of the most disruptive innovations in recent times. However, the consequences of these technological advancements for new venture teams' coordination of tasks (Puranam, Alexy, & Reitzig, 2014) have yet not been explored. This is surprising since the digital age—especially AI—changes many aspects of modern organizational practices, impacting decision-making, and problem-solving (Bailey, Faraj, Hinds, Leonardi, & Krogh, 2022). These technological advancements offer the ability to enhance or even replace human cognition and actions, which carries significant implications for collaboration in teams (Bailey et al., 2022; Raisch & Krakowski, 2021; Soluk & Kammerlander, 2021) and teams' strategic decision-making.

For instance, initial studies have explored team roles and structures in new ventures (Blatt, 2009; Sine, Mitsuhashi, & Kirsch, 2006). However, there is a knowledge gap concerning how new venture teams adapt these roles and structures in times of technological advancement. With AI's integration as a quasi "team member" and the challenges of team expansion or downsizing, an appropriate design of roles and structures in the team becomes more pressing. Furthermore, while potential benefits and disadvantages of diverse new venture teams are subject of much research (Ucbasaran et al., 2003; West III, 2007), the ongoing adoption of digital technologies could revolutionize team cooperation and dynamics and thus change the relationship between team diversity and key firm level outcomes. Yet, most existing literature offers static perspectives on team compositions (Chandler, Honig, & Wiklund, 2005; Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, & Busenitz, 2014), with little emphasis on the evolving dynamics influenced by new digital tools and AI.

In addition to these theoretical avenues for research, we note that AI is not merely a fascinating subject to explore but also presents management scholars with an exceptionally rich methodological toolbox to analyze extensive and diverse data types (Choudhury, Allen, & Endres, 2021; Tang et al., 2022). For instance, utilizing AI-based research methods, such as big data techniques and forecasting, researchers can now leverage deeper insights into entrepreneurs and their ventures (e.g., as done by Lupp, 2023 or Schade & Schuhmacher, 2023). For instance, the employment of multimodal data (Shrestha & He, 2022) facilitates a more comprehensive analysis, overcoming challenges encountered with traditional methods (Obschonka & Fisch, 2022). In the research field of entrepreneurship, especially within new venture team interactions, there is a plethora of multimodal data such as social media interactions, dialogues during entrepreneurial networking events, or pitching videos. This type of data is usually hard to analyze with traditional quantitative and qualitative methods, typically resulting in the negligence of contextual factors and nuances (Shrestha & He, 2022). Hence, the second aim of this research is to explore the innovative application of AI-based methods to augment our examination and understanding of dynamics resulting from different team designs leading us to formulate the following research questions:

- **"How does the digital age impact the design and dynamics of new venture teams, and which factors determine their success or failure in a technologically advanced setting?"**

- **"In what ways can machine learning methods be effectively utilized to enhance the study of new venture team design, and what potential insights could these technological approaches unveil that traditional research methods might overlook?"**

*Please note that we will also accept papers on new venture team design which do not explicitly deal with AI and digital technologies.