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## DOES ENTREPRENEUR'S SOCIAL SKILL SET CONTRIBUTE TO INNOVATIVE NEW VENTURES? AN EXPLORATORY STUDY (SUMMARY)

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## ≈ SUMMARY ≈

**DOES ENTREPRENEUR'S SOCIAL SKILL SET CONTRIBUTE TO INNOVATIVE NEW VENTURES? AN EXPLORATORY STUDY***Wadid M. Lamine, Champagne School of Management, France**Sarfraz A. Mian, SUNY at Oswego, USA***Principal Topic**

The bulk of research on social networks in entrepreneurship focuses on the nature and characteristics of social ties at a given moment in time or on the contribution of the network as a whole as opposed to its development dynamics. Despite the fact that a number of researchers have sought to explore the role of social networks, only a handful of them actually focused on the development of social networks over time (Jack, 2010). And hardly any of these attempts try to understand the role of technical artifacts in the networking process. In this study, we propose to use the Actor-Network-Theory (Callon, 1986), that we believe will lead to fill this gap in the literature. The study provides new insights into the dynamic process of network construction, in the specific context of the NTBF launch.

**Method**

This study was conducted over a period of two years. All five NTBFs projects in our sample benefit from a French national incubating program. Data were gathered using four information sources: semi-directed interviews, participant observation, archive documents and physical artifacts. We performed themed-based content analysis in order to sort the dimensions identified. Using Nvivo8, a data analysis grid was developed employing the double coding procedure. Close reading of the different entrepreneurial trajectories has shown the association-disassociation movements of the actors involved. At the end of our research, three projects were successfully turned into businesses and the remaining two disappeared during the last six months of our study.

**Results and Implications**

By following the trajectories of the projects, we observed that turning an innovative firm project into reality depends on the entrepreneur's ability to overcome a series of irreversible trials. We have identified four types of trials: entry, validation, production and commercialization. We also, identify a distinctive set of social skills possessed by the entrepreneur who succeeded: social adaptability, narrative skills, social boldness, persuasiveness, and social intelligence. Our results reveal that the technical artifacts play a fundamental role in the networking process through functions such as: representation of the entrepreneur, translation of the entrepreneurial situation, structuring of social ties, and acceleration of the entrepreneurial process.

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