ROLE RESTRUCTURING TO ACHIEVE WORK-FAMILY BALANCE: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF MALE AND FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN THE FRENCH BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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ROLE RESTRUCTURING TO ACHIEVE WORK-FAMILY BALANCE: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF MALE AND FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN THE FRENCH BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY

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Principal Topic

Entrepreneurs face continuing challenges in achieving a satisfying balance between work and family roles due to heavy workloads and high levels of risk. As key architects of both their work and family roles, entrepreneurs can achieve balance by altering role content through role restructuring strategies, such as scaling back or role reduction, eliminating a role, expanding a role, or delegation or role sharing. Entrepreneurs who choose role restructuring strategies consistent with their level of work and family salience are also expected to achieve stronger venture performance. Our research questions are: Which role restructuring strategies promote work-family balance and strong venture performance in a demanding, resource-intensive industry such as biotechnology? What impact does gender have?

Method

We conducted a national survey of entrepreneurs in the French biotechnology industry. Dependent variables were work family balance, and venture performance. Independent variables, such as work family conflict, work family enrichment, and work and family salience, were measured using established scales. Role restructuring strategies were measured with an instrument developed for this study. We also controlled for venture size and age, and for entrepreneur sex and age in our hierarchical linear regressions.

Results and Implications

Initial pilot study findings show that entrepreneurs with high business salience and low family salience, who reduce work family conflict through role elimination and role reduction strategies, achieve higher satisfaction with work family balance than those who do not. Entrepreneurs with high business salience and high family salience, who enhance work family enrichment through role sharing and role expansion strategies, achieve higher satisfaction with work family balance than those who do not. Female entrepreneurs choosing role reduction and role elimination strategies experience lower levels of satisfaction with work family balance than males, but both male and female entrepreneurs choosing role sharing and role expansion strategies experience greater levels of satisfaction with work family balance. Entrepreneurs implementing role restructuring strategies that did not match their work and family saliences were less satisfied with work family balance and achieved slightly lower venture performance.

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