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CLARIFYING THE TRANSACTIVE MEMORY SYSTEM— ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION LINK – THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MULTI-LEVEL TEAM PROCESSES (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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≈ INTERACTIVE PAPER ≈

**CLARIFYING THE TRANSACTIVE MEMORY SYSTEM—
ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION LINK – THE
MEDIATING ROLE OF MULTI-LEVEL TEAM PROCESSES**

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Principal Topic

Despite extensive research on firms' entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and its implications for performance (Rauch et al. 2009), yet there is "little understanding of the genesis of EO" and how it can be fostered within firms (Wales et al. 2011). In contemporary knowledge-based economy, teams play a crucial role in leveraging firms' knowledge resources (Cummings 2004) and thus in supporting firms' overall strategic orientations. In this context, a transactive memory system (TMS), i.e., the division of cognitive labor referring to a collective system of information distributed among specialized team members with a shared understanding about who knows what (Wegner 1987), can be a valuable tool. Teams with a stronger TMS can draw from more diverse sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities (Van Knippenberg et al. 2004) and can thus rapidly and flexibly meet the challenges of today's uncertain and complex environment (Kozlowski, Ilgen 2006). By analyzing the TMS—EO relationship we follow the argumentation that teams play a crucial role for firms' strategic and entrepreneurial activities (Barney 1992, Burgelman 1983) and that, "complex social processes" (Lumpkin, Dess 1996, p.164) can be associated with EO.

Method

We use survey data of 56 multidisciplinary branch management teams of a firm. All study variables were drawn from established scales and we can confirm good to excellent reliability and internal consistency with alphas above .80 (Nunnally 1978). Aggregation on group level was justified by calculating the rwg (George 1990). To test our hypothesis, we conducted a regression based mediator analysis with bootstrapping (Preacher, Hayes 2004, 2008).

Results and Implications

The results support our hypothesized sequential mediation with a significantly positive indirect effect of TMS on EO through cognitive, behavioral, and social team processes. Thus, we corroborate TMS as an antecedent of EO and clarify how it unfolds through team processes. We thus contribute to scarce entrepreneurship research investigating the genesis of EO and give credence to literature revealing the importance of management teams' functioning for EO and are among the first to identify outcomes of TMS in field research within an entrepreneurial context.

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