

Introduction to a special issue on conflict management in entrepreneurship in the new economy

This special issue of conflict management in entrepreneurship offers new insights and new perspectives on conflict management in entrepreneurship for both scholars and practitioners.

The first paper is “Perspectives on disruptive technology and innovation: Exploring conflicts, characteristics in emerging economies” by Wan Liu, Renhuai Liu, Hui Chen and Jet Mboga. Their study summarizes and compares the characteristics of disruptive technologies/innovation from the dimension of the nature of technology, the institution and the market trajectory in the context of western developed countries and emerging economies through an analytical review of disruptive technologies/innovations. They discuss the value and uniqueness of Christensen’s theory applied to the Chinese context and take China’s high-speed train as an example to illustrate the main ideas.

The second paper in the special issue is “How harmonious family encourages individuals to enter entrepreneurship: A view from conservation of resource theory” by Weichun Zhu, Jinyi Zhou, Wai Kwan (Elaine) Lau and Steve Welch. With two large longitudinal data sets from different countries, the findings of the paper are twofold. First, personal support from original family and current family can both enhance and increase their entrepreneurial activities. Particularly, not only maintaining a good relationship with parents in adolescence can help individuals gain more support but also a harmonious relationship between parents can provide individuals with more emotional and psychological resources that can help them to start their own businesses. Second, support from the current family can also provide more resources for the individual. Specifically, a more balanced and harmonious relationship with a spouse can reduce the work stress of an individual and motivate he/she to pursue more adventurous career and start his/her own entrepreneurial endeavor.

The third paper is “Entrepreneur’s political involvement and inter-organizational conflict resolution in China’s transition economy” by Aiqi Wu, Xiaotong Zhong and Di Song. This paper explores the impact of entrepreneurs’ political involvement of private-owned enterprise (POEs) on the selection of two modes of interorganizational conflict resolution (private and public) in the transition economies. The paper uses POEs in the transition period of China in 2000 as samples and the results show that the higher the degree of political involvement of entrepreneurs, the more likely they are to rely on the public approach. Furthermore, POEs are generally more satisfied with conflict resolution using the private approach than the public approach. The study provides some interesting findings, which shed light on how the increase of the degree of regional marketization will weaken the positive relationship between POEs’ adoption of the private approach and satisfaction of resolution.

The fourth paper is “Team leader’s conflict management styles and innovation performance in entrepreneurial teams” by Jieli Yin, Muxiao Jia, Zhenzhong Ma and Ganli Liao. The study arrives at three conclusions. First, team leaders’ cooperative conflict management style promotes team passion that can effectively improve team innovation performance. Second, team passion mediates the relationship between team leaders’ cooperative conflict management style and team innovation performance to some extent. Third, team emotional intelligence plays a moderating role in the relationship between team leaders’ cooperative conflict management style and team passion.



The fifth paper is “Star(tup) Wars: Decoupling task from relationship conflict” by Kozusznik Malgorzata. The authors conducted three studies of startup members in three countries to explore the moderating effect of conflict behaviors and related coping strategies on task and relationship conflicts in startup teams.

The sixth paper is “Exploring the relationship between entrepreneurial failure and conflict between work and family from the conservation of resources perspective” by Xiaoyu Yu, Xiaotong Meng, Gang Cao and Yingya Jia. Using the data of entrepreneurial enterprises in China, the research examines the relationship between entrepreneurial failure and work–family conflict (WFC)/family–work conflict (FWC) and the moderating role of perceived time control and organizational slack. They found that entrepreneurial failure has a significant positive impact on FWC, whereas entrepreneurial failure has a positive but not significant impact on WFC. In addition, perceived time control and organizational slack significantly weaken the positive impact of entrepreneurial failure on WFC/FWC.

The seventh paper is “The effect of digital transformation strategy on performance: The moderating role of cognitive conflict” by Hecheng Wang, Junzheng Feng, Hui Zhang and Xin Li. The authors investigated how digital transformation strategy (DTS) affects short- and long-term financial performances and the impact of boundary conditions of TMT cognitive conflict on organizational performance improvement delivered by DTS. Based on the study of 156 Chinese enterprises, the authors found that DTS can promote short-term and long-term financial performances. The results show that the relationship between DTS and short-term financial performance is inverted u-shaped moderated by the cognitive conflict of TMT, and there remains a positive moderating effect on the relationship between DTS and long-term financial performance.

The eighth paper is “Conflicts between business and government in bike sharing system” by Hong Yang, Yimei Hu, Han Qiao, Shouyang Wang and Feng Jiang. There are task and interest conflicts between bike-sharing companies and government officials, and the conflict process is dynamic and interactive because of different perspectives. They analyze the dynamic interaction between the regulations of governments and strategies of bike-sharing companies from the perspective of evolutionary game theory and provide some management insights and policy implications.

The ninth paper is “Effects of CEO humility and relationship conflict on entrepreneurial performance” by Yi Li, Feng Wei, Siyue Chen and Yushan Yan. Based on a questionnaire survey on CEOs and their entrepreneurial team members of 171 start-ups in Shanghai, China, the authors make four main conclusions. First, the humility of the CEO can reduce relationship conflict in entrepreneurial teams. Second, in entrepreneurial teams, CEO political skills moderate the link between CEO humility and relationship conflict. The weaker the CEO political skills, the stronger the influence of CEO humility on relationship conflict. The stronger the political skill of CEO, the weaker the effect of CEO humility on relationship conflict. Third, relationship conflicts in entrepreneurial teams are negatively related to entrepreneurial performance. Finally, CEO political skill moderates the mediating effect of entrepreneurial team relationship conflict on the CEO humility–entrepreneurial performance link.

The last paper is “How social entrepreneurs’ attention allocation and ambidextrous behavior enable hybrid organization” by Wenzhi Zheng, James Bronson and Chunpei Lin. This paper, based on the paradox theory, investigates the allocation of social entrepreneurs’ attention and their resource actions that lead to hybrid organizations. The authors make an empirical research on social entrepreneurship in China and have several findings. First, the attention focus of social entrepreneurs influences the way in which organizations acquire resources. An external attention focus is conducive to the acquisition of external resources

and the improvement of social performance, whereas internal attention focus will lead to ambidextrous behavior and the acquisition of both internal and external resource advantages, to improve the overall social entrepreneurship performance. Second, the internal attention and paradoxical thinking of social entrepreneurs are more conducive to high entrepreneurial performance. At last, normative pressure positively moderates the relationship between social entrepreneurs' internal attention and strategic human resource management.

The rapidly growing research on conflict management covered a variety of research topics in the field of conflict management over the past decade, one of which is the relationship between conflict and entrepreneurship. Despite the fact that there are a number of studies on how conflict management stimulates entrepreneurship research, how to relate conflict management with entrepreneurship and how to deal with the conflict management issues in entrepreneurship management in the current digital economy remain to be better answered and further explored. This special issue has addressed these important but underexplored issues with different perspectives on this research area – Conflict Management in Entrepreneurship and provided new research findings of conflict and entrepreneurship or new ventures for both emerging economies and matured economies.

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