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A longitudinal project of new venture teamwork and outcomes

Brattström, Anna; Delmar, Frédéric; Johnson, Alan R; Wennberg, Karl

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PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

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Anna Brattström
Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship
Lund University School of Economics and Management
Box 7080, SE-220 07 Lund, Sweden
E-mail: anna.brattstrom@fek.lu.se

Frédéric Delmar
emlyon business school
23, avenue Guy de Collongue
CS 40203 69134 Ecully Cedex France
&
Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship
Lund University School of Economics and Management
Box 7080, SE-220 07 Lund, Sweden
E-mail: delmar@em-lyon.com

Alan R. Johnson
Research Fellow at Nord University Business School, Bodø, Norway,
Research Fellow at RATIO Research Institute, Stockholm, Sweden &
Visiting Research Fellow at Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship, Lund University,
Sweden
E-mail: alan.r.johnson@nord.no

Karl Wennberg
Institute of Analytical Sociology (IAS)
Department of Management and Engineering
Linköping University
E-mail: karl.wennberg@liu.se

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A LONGITUDINAL PROJECT OF NEW VENTURE TEAMWORK AND OUTCOMES

<a> Summary

This chapter presents a research project dedicated to better understand how new venture teams work together to achieve desired outcomes. Teams, as opposed to an individual, start a majority of all innovative new ventures. Yet, little research or theory exists in new venture settings about how members interact with each other over time—teamwork—to produce innovative technologies, products, and services. We believe a systematic study of social and psychological processes that underlie new venture teamwork and venture outcomes is timely and important. Unique features of our research project include: (1) a team level focus on social and psychological processes, to assess relations to proximal (e.g., innovation, first sales and team satisfaction), and distal value creation outcomes (e.g., sales growth, raised capital and profits). (2) Combined qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to provide both theory building and theory testing for the relations of interest. (3) A time-sequential design with data collection every three months over one year to allow us to investigate the relations of interest for new ventures.

A LONGITUDINAL PROJECT OF NEW VENTURE TEAMWORK AND OUTCOMES

<a> Introduction

This chapter presents an ongoing longitudinal project of *teamwork* in innovative new venture teams. We study how new venture teams work together and how that work affect team members' ability to collectively convert resources into meaningful outcomes.

Entrepreneurship research has seen an increasing focus on teams (e.g., Cardon, Post, & Forster, 2017; Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, & Busenitz, 2014b; Ruef, 2010). This is not surprising. Much of the work in setting up new ventures is completed through teamwork (Hellerstedt, 2009; Reynolds, 2007). Teams pool resources and can pursue opportunities that are more complex and innovative. Teams mitigate uncertainty and provide legitimacy for the individual team member. Venture capitalists emphasize the importance of well-functioning team when investing (Hallen & Eisenhardt, 2012; Kaplan, Sensoy, & Strömberg, 2009).

To date, most studies of entrepreneurial teams has focused on initial conditions or inputs, such as team composition or the skills of innovative team members (Colombo, Rossi-Lamastra, & Matassini, 2015; Jin et al., 2016). A few studies also recognize *that* teamwork plays a crucial role in transforming these initial inputs into innovative output (Carland & Carland Jr, 2012; Eisenhardt, 2013; Kiss & Barr, 2015). Yet, little systematic research attention has been paid to how team members work together to achieve desirable outcomes in the context of new ventures (see Arrow et al., 2004; Klotz et al., 2014 for two reviews that shows this clearly).

The aim of our research project is to advance scholarly understanding of how members work together in new venture teams (hereafter *teams*) during firm's early development. We seek to understand how teamwork affect firm level outcomes: *innovation*—development of new and useful technologies, products and services – and *performance* –

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value creation for entrepreneurs, their employees, and the economy (Delmar, 2006). More specifically, the intention is to understand (a) if teamwork matters for venture outcomes, (b) how and what type of team work matters and (c) for what kind of ventures or types of situations these venture face.

As consistently pointed out in literature reviews, teamwork within innovative new ventures is complex and it is still not well understood in entrepreneurship (e.g. Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014; Collins, Gibson, Quigley, & Parker, 2016; Davidsson & Gordon, 2012; Foss & Lindenberg, 2012; Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, & Busenitz, 2014a; Salas, Goodwin, & Burke, 2008). This is an important gap in research. First, because new venture teamwork is a crucial building block of the new organization and to its performance (Argote & Ren, 2012; Colombo et al., 2015). New venture teams are teams where team members work together as a collective around a shared future to become an organization (Ruef, 2010). Their work is the micro-foundation for many organizational capabilities and routines and thus have a long lasting imprint on the new venture's subsequent development (Argote & Ren, 2012). Teamwork is also at the core of new ventures' competitive advantages, especially in knowledge intensive sector. Team research by and large suggest that team performance is more strongly linked to how teams work than to team composition (DeChurch, Mesmer-Magnus, & Doty, 2013; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001).

Understanding new venture teamwork is also important because new venture teams behave differently from entrepreneurial individuals. Teams are collective and socially constructed. Knowledge we have about individual behavior thus does not apply to team behavior. The team literature consistently shows that individuals in teams think and behave fundamentally different from when making decisions themselves (Kugler, Kausel, & Kocher, 2012; Salas et al., 2008).

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Understanding teamwork in the specific context of new ventures is also important, because these teams are different from teams in established organizations. The outcomes of new ventures are uncertain, delayed and highly skewed. New venture teams are self-managed, operate in an emergent organization, where boundaries, roles and hierarchies are established along the way. They are idea-driven where ideas are embodied in a few key actors, central to team construction. New venture teams, more than other teams, need to negotiate new information and make radical changes (Gersick, 1991, 1994), while validating the value of the business idea with different external stakeholders. They operate under significant stress because they have often with limited resources and high uncertainty. They are more homogenous and have prior professional, private or romantic affiliations. They only start a venture once and consequently lack experience (Jin et al., 2016).

To fulfill our purpose and advance scholarly understanding of how members work together in new venture teams, our project addresses three weaknesses in current research. (1) We take the team – as opposed to the individual entrepreneur – as the unit of analysis. (2) We focus on how teamwork unfold over time, as opposed to a static approach focusing on how variables co-vary at a single point in time. (3) We combine the use of qualitative data, hand-collected questionnaire data sampled from both individual team members and their key stakeholders, together with archival data. We discuss the significance of these advancements further below.

<a> Central Concepts

** New Venture Teams**

We define a new venture team as two or more individuals who commit to each other, who interact dynamically, interdependently and adaptively (Salas, Dickinson, Converse, & Tannenbaum, 1992) to create a new firm with specific goals, boundaries and coordinated systems of activities (Aldrich, 1999). This definition is somewhat different from the

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definitions found in the literature on new venture teams. Three definitions of new venture teams dominates the literature. A new venture team is (a) the group of individuals who are actively involved in the launch of a new venture and have an ownership interest in that venture. A new venture team can also be (b) the top management team, referring to a small group of the most influential individuals at the apex of the new organization (Ensley, Pearson, & Pearce, 2003; Foo, Sin, & Yiong, 2006). A new venture team can also be (c) the founding collaborators, meaning a set of individuals who contribute distinctively to the venture creation effort. Common to these definitions, is that team members are founders, share risks and have a leading decision making position.

Our definition is more encompassing. A key element in our definition are that a new venture team does not necessarily mean a highly formalized or cohesive group with a strong identity. Rather, we envision a less formally structured constellation of people, who operate under some degree of interdependence and with a shared goal, i.e., trying to exploit a business idea by establishing a new organization. Moreover, different from previous definitions, which emphasize decision-making, our definition of new venture teams encompass teamwork. Decision-making is one of many activities teams engage in during teamwork. We have chosen such a definition for three reasons: teamwork focus on how teams actually work together not only on decisions made; teams are composed of many different stakeholder– not only founders– to carry out work; and teams are dynamic entities.

First, new venture teams not only decide what to do, but do work on achieving a number of task. Teamwork requires different constellation of people to achieve related outcomes where a constellation might make decision and other constellation might carry out the work. This means that for a certain, specific task only some members and not others are involved, potentially mixing up team members with influential stakeholders during brief but critical tasks. A typical example would be close work with customers on product and service

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development. In new venture teams, the dependence between the members who decide and the members who implement is high. A group might have a structuring subunit acting as decision makers, but all the members of the whole team do the work. The team is a functional unit that decide and acts to achieve tasks with acceptable standard to justify its survival.

Second, new venture teams are founded with different inaugural roles and positions, where members from the beginning differ in influence, status and power. Where team members have to adapt to each other to achieve desired outcomes. A new venture team can as easily be a sole founder and owner that assembles a team around him or her; it can be a group of friends or colleagues teaming up; or it can be family members deciding to start a venture together. In first case, power, equity and knowledge is concentrated to single person. In the second case, power, equity and knowledge might be shared. In the third category, family bounds will change how the team operates. How team members adapt to each other in the new venture teams is likely to be important. Founding members have strong influence, status and power on what task to do and how to do them. Founding members are likely to set norms and rules for how to coordinate, communicate, and manage conflicts.

Third, new venture teams are dynamic units. Members might move in and out of groups depending on their knowledge and involvement. The members might differ in how much time, knowledge and resources they commit to realizing this idea, and when they do so. Further, as the team matures, demands will increase and with that the need for new skills (Penrose, 1959). Hence, teams change with time. With time, dependence, power, norms and rules that guide teamwork will change.

In short, we believe our definition of new venture teams reflect a more comprehensive view of how work is actually carried out in new ventures by all the members of the team, not only the founders.

Teamwork

Teamwork is different from team compositional variables, such as the gender, experience or age of team members. Teamwork is also different from team's and team members' task works (Bowers, Braun, & Morgan Jr, 1997). Whereas task work represents what the team does, teamwork represents how the team is doing it together.

Broadly speaking, teamwork can be broken down in team behavioral processes and emergent states (Marks et al., 2001). Team behavioral processes describe how new venture team members work together. Formally stated, team behavioral processes are “members’ interdependent acts that converts inputs to outcomes through cognitive, verbal, and behavioral activities directed toward organizing taskwork to achieve collective goals” (Marks et al., 2001: 357). At the most general level, teams’ behavioral processes can be sorted into three broad categories: (1) transition processes, describing how the team evaluates opportunities and makes plans (2) action processes, describing how the teams take action and (3) interpersonal processes, describing how team members manage their interpersonal relationships (Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001b). Under these categories, we find processes such as (1) mission analysis and goal specification; (2) monitoring and coordination; and (3) conflict management, motivation building and affect management.

Teams’ behavioral processes are different from the affective, motivational or cognitive emergent states (Marks et al., 2001b). Emergent states are properties of the teams. These emergent states, such as trust, cohesion, identity and transactive memory are over time outcomes of and inputs to team interaction. They are not processes, because they do not describe how team members work together. For example, coordinating work (a process) will function differently if members trust (a state) each other than if they do not. These states are emergent, because they develop over time as in team member learn to trust each other as they continuously work together. For excellent reviews and taxonomies of team processes, we

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refer to the work of Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, and Jundt (2005), Collins et al. (2016) and Dinh and Salas (2017).

<a> Survey of the field

Research on new venture teams has substantially advanced our understanding of how surface-level variables, such as team composition, demographics, venture resources and strategies influence new venture performance (e.g., Beckman, 2006; Ensley & Hmieleski, 2005; Ferguson, Cohen, Burton, & Beckman, 2016). In comparison, our understanding of how new venture teams actually work is very limited. A few studies have addressed conflict in new venture teams and a handful of studies have investigated how the quality of team collaboration affect team membership turnover (e.g., Brinckmann & Hoegl, 2011). However, as demonstrated by Klotz et al. (2014a) in their recent review: there are hardly no studies of action processes in new venture teams.

This is somewhat paradoxical. Despite the wide recognition of entrepreneurship as collective activity favoring action, we know very little about how members of a new venture team takes action. Indeed, even though both team membership turnover and team conflict are important, we know little about how work is carried out. For example, how do teams interpret and evaluate their mission? How do they identify and prioritize among goals? How do they develop strategies for accomplishing these goals? How do they develop systems for tracking performance, resources and for understanding their environment? How do they assist one another in performing their tasks? How do they orchestrate and time their interdependent actions; how do they generate and maintain collective confidence and motivation and how do they manage both positive and negative emotions during their entrepreneurial journey? In new venture teams, emotions probably play a central role due to the psychological ownership to

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the project. For the focal founders, this venture is “their baby” and their involvement generate strong affective responses to different forms of feedback (Hsu, 2013; Wasserman, 2006).

We know from decades of team research that these processes matter for team performance. Arguably, this is true also for new venture teams, but we still do not know (a) if teamwork matters for venture outcomes, (b) how and what type of teamwork matters and (c) for what kind of ventures or types of situations these ventures face.

Teamwork is a black box in our understanding of new venture development for three reasons. With black box, we refer to the not well-understood and complex processes that link inputs such as team composition and resources to outcomes. Teamwork is how the team work together to achieve desired outcomes. First, most entrepreneurship research has focused on the processes of individuals as opposed to teams (Anderson et al., 2014; Ruef, 2010). Second, research on teamwork in the broader team literature tends to focus on top management teams or professional teams in established organizations. These studies seldom adopt a time perspective although such are highly suggested as an important next step to develop the field (Bell & Outland, 2017; Collins et al., 2016; Kozlowski, Mak, & Chao, 2016; Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001a). Findings from such studies are hard to generalize to the context of new venture teams, which are autonomous, self-managed and self-selected; and operate in a much more uncertain, volatile, and resource scarce context. Third, studies on entrepreneurial teams have tended to use static research design focusing on team demographics or venture resources and strategies, largely ignoring teams’ cognitive- and behavioral-based processes (de Mol, Khapova, & Elfring, 2015; Jin et al., 2016; Klotz et al., 2014a). In the following, we discuss the implications of these three limitations in prior work.

From entrepreneurs to new venture team. Research on entrepreneurial individuals has highlighted the importance of cognitive and behavioral processes, including expectations, self-efficacy and intentions (e.g. Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Johnson & Delmar, 2010). Yet, how

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people think and behave when being part of a team is fundamentally different from how they think and behave when alone (Thibaut, 1986). In teams, cognition and behavior are social processes. For example, the social identity, or how team members classify themselves and others into various social categories, is fundamentally important for understanding cognition and behavior within teams, but less relevant for understanding individual-level processes. Further, whereas individual entrepreneurs set their expectations and intentions in their own mind – in teams, individuals need to negotiate; discuss, disagree and reconcile before forming expectations and intentions. Team members need to engage with one another to exert minority influence over the goals and plans that the majority, or high-status members, want to keep (Johnson, van de Schoot, Delmar, & Crano, 2015). This process is not trivial because majorities or high-status members in groups typically do not welcome challenges to their authority (Crano, 2010). These types of social and interactive processes have not been part of the research on entrepreneurial individuals.

The new venture is a unique context. We can also contribute to research outside entrepreneurship by studying new venture teams. Team studies in more established organizational settings have shown that teamwork are important antecedents of team creativity, effectiveness and innovation (e.g., Schippers, West, & Dawson, 2015). The new venture setting provides unique settings that can extend and, perhaps, overturn these existing insights. Compared to established organizational settings, new venture teams have a short history of interaction and work under conditions of resource scarcity, uncertainty and volatility (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). Whereas most organizational contexts are relatively stable, or subject to gradual change, innovative new ventures nearly always experience radical transformations as the new venture develops over time. Such transformations include change of individual members and team boundaries (Chandler, Honig, & Wiklund, 2005; Hellerstedt, 2009), change in goals and attention-focus (Karau & Kelly, 2004; Mesmer-Magnus &

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DeChurch, 2009), as well as positive and negative events that push teams in new directions.

Theoretical advancement occurs through tightening – not stretching – assumptions and by clearly defining the contextual boundary conditions for a theory (Chimezie & Osigweh, 1989). New venture teams thus provide an excellent field context to test empirically the extent to which insights from the extant team behavior literature are transferable to more resource scarce, uncertainty and turbulent contexts.

From team composition to teamwork. The decisions and actions of a new venture team has far reaching consequences for the emergence and performance of the new venture. Scholars have over the years tried to better understand how team composition. i.e., the characteristics of the members, relate to strategic decisions and new venture performance (Cooper, Gimeno-Gascon, & Woo, 1994; Delmar & Shane, 2006; Jin et al., 2016). This research is based on the assumption that individuals and groups are defined by their knowledge schemas and biases when processing information and making decisions. The members' backgrounds, affiliations, and experiences shape these schemas and biases. The composition of a new venture team in terms of backgrounds, affiliations and experiences should therefore tell us something about how the team will process information, make decisions and in general work together to achieve desired outcomes (Bunderson & Vegt, 2018; Mathieu, Tannenbaum, Donsbach, & Alliger, 2014). However, the team composition literature in entrepreneurship and in the broader team literature fails to find consistent results. A reason is that time and context is not sufficiently dealt with (Bell & Outland, 2017; Mayo, Kakarika, Mainemelis, & Deuschel, 2017; Mohammed et al., 2012), which we discuss in the next section. Another reason is that such demographic variables, while easily available and observable to researchers, they do rely on the above mentioned assumptions on individual biases and group processes. Such assumptions about the psychological and social processes defining teamwork are seldom tested and they remain largely a mystery; complex and still not

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well understood. Teamwork is an intervening process between team composition and outcomes. As we will see, the reality is that studying new venture teamwork has its own unique challenges to collect, hopefully, high-quality data on teamwork. We believe that our project can help better understand the role of teamwork in linking inputs to desired outcomes in new ventures.

Taken together, by shifting analysis from the individual to the team, and by moving the focus from team demographics and resources to teamwork, our study aims to unearth novel mechanisms to better understand how teamwork influence innovation and performance in new ventures. Given that the majority of new ventures are started and managed by teams, not individuals, the current project will thus help to create a more accurate and better-specified understanding of innovative new ventures.

<a> A shift in focus: from static relationships to processes

Research in entrepreneurship and in the broader team literature advocate for a stronger process perspective (Gartner & Carter, 2003; Lichtenstein, Carter, Dooley, & Gartner, 2007; Selden & Fletcher, 2015). A reason is that we still lack a clear understanding of teams and the work they do affect team outcomes in general and in new venture in particular. For research to progress we need to introduce time and change over time, the context dependence of the process and the effect of specific team members on the process itself (Dinh & Salas, 2017). Hence, researchers need tools that allow them to embrace rather eschew complexity, multilevel systems and time.

A multi-method approach to encompass complexity. Consistent with most team research, we view teams as complex systems (Mathieu, Hollenbeck, van Knippenberg, & Ilgen, 2017). The challenge for research is how this complexity can best analyzed and understood. This complexity has important methodological consequences for researchers

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interested in studying new venture teamwork. A message is that researchers must dare to venture outside their traditional research designs if they want to succeed in capturing the complexity of teamwork.

Different to most studies in entrepreneurship, this project takes a multi-method approach to study teams, combining the use of (1) a small number of qualitative case studies based on process theorizing, (2) the collection of questionnaire data that we collect in multiple waves over 12 months, and (3) a variety of archival (secondary) data on individuals and firms. The use of multiple methods allows a richer, more holistic, rigorous and relevant understanding to unearth nuances about how team processes evolve. Indeed, we are studying emergent processes that take place in a resource scarce, uncertain and volatile context. Relying on just one method can limit knowledge development and we need methods to cross-fertilize, especially as so little similar research has been done previously in this field.

On one hand, case studies are ideal for theory building and theory extension (e.g. Edmondson & McManus, 2007). They allow us to look into complex and multi-level phenomena for which the explanations from current theory may fall short. On the other hand, questionnaire and archival data are better suited for later and more mature stages of theory testing. Quantitative data sacrifices richness and complexity of case study research, but gains from more precise testing of theoretical propositions with internal validity and external generalizability. One purpose of case studies is to generate novel arguments and propose theoretical mechanisms for further scrutiny using quantitative inventories. The quantitative part of our project not only starts from insights gleaned from extant research but will also build on tentative propositions from our case studies, to generate hypotheses for theory testing and refinement.

New venture teams are multilevel. Organizations, including new organizations, are multilevel systems (Kim, Wennberg, & Croidieu, 2016). Team members are nested in teams.

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Teams are nested in organizations. Each position in these nested systems denotes a specific level (Collins et al., 2016; González-Romá & Hernández, 2017). A key idea behind multilevel systems is that the characteristics of a given entity (e.g., a team) are related to the characteristics of other entities that reside at different levels (individual members). For example, the immediate tasks (e.g., searching for external capital or strategy development) of the new venture affect certain practices (e.g., pitching or business model design) implemented by the team leader, induce a certain level of trust or team cohesion (emergent states), which in turn produces a certain level of job satisfaction in the members of the team (depending on their interest and knowledge for the specific task).

Hence different levels affect each other, where individual affects team and team affects ventures and vice versa. Further, team research can be done across multiple level of analysis where individuals are part of teams, and teams are part of context in which teams' evolve. Individual team members contribute to the team, but their behavior is also affected by other team members and by the team itself. The demands on the team and its ability to perform will change with the emergent states and so forth.

New ventures and teamwork evolves over time. To understand new venture teams' innovation and performance, one has to understand how relationships unfold over time the trajectory, speed, transition points and under what contingencies and affect outcomes. Time gives us insight about (a) how trajectories emerge and grow, and (b) when these trajectories change into something else. For example, founders might develop rules of how to decide and act with each other (a trajectory of emergence and growth), but this trajectory might be broken when a new member is introduced as the rules most likely need to be renegotiated to accommodate the newcomer (a change in the trajectory).

In teams, cognition and behavior is a social and interactive process, influenced by how team members communicate with and relate to one another (Johnson et al., 2015). Important

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time-variant processes such as goal setting and task monitoring (Marks et al. 2001), majority influence via social identity and persuasive arguments (Crano & Seyranian, 2007), as well as conflict and trust affects how team members perform. The team literature has in a number of recent reviews and editorials advocated strongly for a more temporal focus on teamwork to advance theory (Collins et al., 2016; Hoch & Kozlowski, 2014; Keyton, 2016; Kozlowski et al., 2016). In their recent review of the innovation literature, Anderson et al. (2014: 1310) emphasized that: “Research that conceives of team climate and processes as antecedents far outweighs research that addresses processes in real time either in organizational or experimental settings. Indeed, notably few studies have examined within-team innovation processes as they unfold over time”.

While a process perspective is much sought for in team, management (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas, & Van De Ven, 2013), innovation (Anderson et al., 2014) and entrepreneurship research (Van de Ven & Engleman, 2004), collecting longitudinal data in general and on teams specifically is complex and time consuming. Processual insights are dependent on both qualitative and quantitative data that are difficult to accumulate. Simply put, few research groups have had the capability, the motivation and the resources needed to carry out a project such as this. The risks are high.

Extant research, of both qualitative and quantitative nature, has thus mainly studied organizational phenomena at a single point(s) in time or between two time-points. Such studies have contributed insights into how certain conditions trigger particular consequences (i.e. X leading to Y), but they cannot explain the underlying processes through which relations unfold. We therefore know very little about how X and Y emerge, develop, grow, or terminate over time. We aim to extend previous research and theory by not only considering the development of X and Y, separately, but also how relations between X and Y take to develop, how long the relation remain, and how quickly they fade (Mitchell & James, 2001).

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We do know, for example, that new ventures suffer from liabilities of smallness and newness due to lack of resources, reputation, bargaining power and experience (Aldrich, 1999; Stinchcombe, 1965). This knowledge is of little practical use to a new venture team, which is trying to figure out how to overcome such liabilities. For a new venture team, more relevant questions include: which are the next steps to establish our venture, and in which sequence? And at what time and pace should we move forward? Research suggests that such steps or strategic choices are frequent and fast, but also a source to intense conflicts.

Eisenhardt (1989) shows that successful teams make critical strategic choices in less than three months and often less than six weeks and have very intensive conflicts. By shifting the focus – from a more static to a more processual perspective – we can address these types of more relevant questions. In the following section, we describe our methodological approach in details.

<a> **Project description**

To best understand how teamwork affect new venture outcomes, the research group actively pursue both a qualitative and quantitative study that are generating different forms of knowledge and complementary knowledge. We have the luxury to develop theory in the case studies and potentially test them in the larger data set. The different studies also allow us to understand and explore time and process from different ontological and epistemological perspectives (Arrow, Poole, Henry, Wheelan, & Moreland, 2004; Van de Ven & Poole, 2005). The combination of being able to move back and forth across qualitative and quantitative data is an advantage of this project. The qualitative studies we conduct are coordinated to enhance quality and the probability of making theoretical contributions.

Our project is based teams in innovative new ventures situated in incubators in Sweden, Denmark and Russia. A pilot study was conducted to pre-test survey measures and

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ensure necessary access to incubator sites in order to collect the data required for the scope of the research project. We decided to make our study international from the beginning to increase the potential generalizability of our findings. Sweden, Russia and Denmark are interesting countries to compare and contrast from a teamwork perspective. How teamwork operate tend to differ across two important culture dimensions, power distance and collectivism (Barsade & Knight, 2015; Bell, 2007). The three countries differ substantially across these two cultural dimensions, and we can argue that new venture teamwork plays out differently as a consequence. In June 2018, we also have advanced plans to survey teams in China and adding a fourth country to our project. Controlling for cultural dimensions will allows us to speak more directly of the generalizability of our results.

We used incubators as they are increasingly important in nurturing these types of ventures and therefore incubators represent an important context to study, but also a cost efficient way to sample teams (Ebbers, 2014). The incubator context allows us to select cases with favorable structural antecedents. Incubated teams are screened and evaluated before entering the incubator. They are therefore likely to have the antecedent characteristics associated with high performance (e.g. a decent business idea and minimum-level of experience, entrepreneurial skill and entrepreneurial motivation, etc.). Given their location in the incubator, they have access to some minimal level of resources (e.g. an office space, access to a network of coaches, capital etc.). The choice of teams within the incubator context is therefore important: by selecting cases with favorable structural antecedents, we can focus on team processes when comparing across cases, minimizing variation in less relevant factors.

 Project organization

This project represents a major collaboration between several schools, universities and departments across Sweden and Russia. The schools and universities in Sweden are: Lund

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University, Linköping University, Chalmers School of Technology, Jönköping International Business School, and Stockholm School of Economics. In Russia, Sankt Petersburg Graduate School of Management participates. While most participating researchers are in entrepreneurship, we also have two researchers at the department of psychology. For most participating units, we have senior and junior person presents. The junior person is either a post-doc or a PhD student. In terms of people involved, this project represents one of the largest efforts ever in the context of entrepreneurship research in Sweden. Table 1 summarizes the schools and the people involved.

*****Table 1 about here*****

The quantitative study

A six-month pilot project was initiated in November 2015. We run a pilot study on 20 new venture teams at incubators in Sweden. The pilot was used: (1) to validate and, where necessary, fine tune our questionnaire instruments, (2) to establish archival and other data collection procedures, (3) to provide prior qualitative insights in how to best conduct qualitative data collection on the subject of teamwork. We made some valuable insights from the pilot phase leading to important changes in the main study.

We did a detailed simulation study to test the robustness of our study to small team effects (teams with two members) and to missing values at different levels of measurement. The new team inventory was validated with leading experts and was tested on 20 teams. However, we discovered that the instrument was too lengthy. The scales were subject to important ceiling effects, i.e., the scales were skewed severely towards the highest values with limited variance. Team recruitment and team member retainment was much more challenging

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than expected. Incubators vary greatly in how they support teams and emphasize different outcomes (e.g., sales vs. raising external capital).

Our design has two important advantages. First, collecting multiple observation points intensively allows us to get precise data on how processes evolve in the most volatile phase of a new venture's development and use analysis techniques developed to model such developments. Second, we use of "planned missing data". This means that we do not ask respondents all questions on every occasion and, thus, makes the questionnaire about half the length on each occasion (see Little, 2013 for explanation and citations). Thereby we hope to keep high response rates and limit attrition while keeping high data quality.

We have carefully selected validated measures from previous entrepreneurship and team behavior literature for the project. We developed: (1) a repeated questionnaire with social and psychological measures for new venture team members. We focus on team processes (interpersonal, transition and action processes), emergent states (team identity, identity fusion, trust, transactive memory systems) and outcomes (team learning, creativity and viability). (2) A once-off section of the questionnaire to team members capture some of their time-invariant characteristics related to team composition and inputs to teamwork. (3) A questionnaire to capture how stakeholders (e.g. customers, investors, incubator managers) assess the team's innovation, customer satisfaction, productivity, and quality (Ebbers, 2014). To assess venture development we use (4) a shortened inventory from the comprehensive PSED 2 project (Reynolds & Curtin, 2009) to allow for compatibility to previous longitudinal work in entrepreneurship plus financial performance.

Using multiple indicator measurement allows us to use psychometric analyses to verify not only construct validity at a particular point in time, but also measurement invariance from one time to the next. Multiple data sources—team members, stakeholders

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outside the team, and archival documents from incubators—help mitigate the common method bias in regression analyses.

The main study was initiated in March 2017 and will end June 2019. We aim to follow 120 teams based on the simulation in the pilot study to achieve sufficient statistical power. We will create a longitudinal panel of 120 teams aged between 0 and 5 years. As of June 2018, we have recruited 114 new venture teams at incubators in Sweden, Russia and Denmark. We follow the teams intensively for 12 months, and we plan to follow them less intensively for another three years. We did some substantial changes compared to the pilot study.

We did retain incubators as our pool to recruit teams. We now work even closer with the incubators to boost participation rates. Specifically on each sites, we have matched a senior person (professor) with a junior person (post or doctoral student) to guarantee more closeness with the incubators and their teams. However, recruiting and getting satisfactory response rates are still our biggest challenges now. Survey management and data collection are extremely time consuming.

We initially planned to survey team members every two months for two years. However, to uphold response rates we decided to survey for twelve and every three months. This will give us five observation points per team member (at month 0, 3, 6, 9 and 12). The choice to survey teams every three months is in line with previous research on the importance of decision making cycles (six weeks to three months) and the importance of the initial construction of small advantages or disadvantages leading to either upward or downward spiral of team effectiveness. The chosen time interval between surveys will allow us to capture and model these changes.

For venture level data, we measure the ventures development every six months (at month 0, 6 and 12). This gives us three observation points per venture. A six-month interval

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was deemed sufficient as we are looking at longer processes of achieving various milestones (Beckman & Burton, 2008; Hallen & Eisenhardt, 2012).

Time is central to team research and but few studies still account for time. For example, Cronin, Weingart, and Todorova (2011) review 55 team research articles published in the most prominent journals in 2010 and found that 26% used longitudinal data. Collins et al. (2016) suggest that most papers, if longitudinal, seldom use more than three waves of observations. This means that our researchers will have access to valuable data after three observation points or six month of field data. This increases the probability of timely and high quality publications while we continue to improve the overall quality of the data by adding waves. The full potential of our study is delivered at the chosen five observation points.

To increase response rate and mitigate fatigue, we had tested and kept planned missing data to increase the variation in the survey (Garnier-Villarreal, Rhemtulla, & Little, 2014; Wu, Jia, Rhemtulla, & Little, 2016). We cut the number of items for teamwork from 143 to 71. To deal with ceiling effects (Ho & Yu, 2015), we replaced the Likert with sliding scales going from 0 to 100, and we did a number of item alterations to create more extreme items (Bäckström & Björklund, 2014). We noticed that teams varied in how long they had worked together before joining an incubator. We were therefore sampling new venture team of varying age and survival probabilities. This could generate problems with left truncated data (Blossfeld & Rohwer, 1995; Delmar, 2015; Yang & Aldrich, 2012) so we introduced a number of retrospective items about teamwork at the time of the respondent joining the team.

In short, based on the pilot study we made substantial changes to create a more efficient design. Despite those changes, recruitment and overall collection is still a big challenge.

 The qualitative study

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We still lack strong qualitative work on new venture teams with a process perspective. Publishing qualitative studies on teams has also a strong tradition in itself due to the complexity of teamwork. In line with the inductive theory-building efforts characterizing case study methodology, our data collection is open ended, but not naïve. As evident in the above, we have a clear understanding about the unit of our analysis (teams), the content of our study (cognitive, social and behavioral teamwork) and the focus of our analysis (processes, as opposed to static “correlations”). At the same time, we refrain from making clear deductive statements before collecting data, thus allowing for unintended and unanticipated insights to emerge. The purpose of the qualitative study is to build new theory or substantially extend existing theory. In this way, the qualitative study constitutes a bridge to later, more deductive, theory testing.

A qualitative pilot study was initiated in January 2016. The sampled cases include university-based spinoffs teams and teams whose business ideas emerged outside of the university contexts. All teams sampled express high growth ambitions and were run within the context of a business incubator in Sweden. In-depth interviews with team members with three-month interval were supplemented with secondary data and interviews with key stakeholders. On occasion, researchers also participated as silent observers in team meetings.

For the qualitative pilot we observed that teamwork seems to matter the most when the teams are doing either well or poorly. There seems to be substantial variation within teams in their perception of team processes. A surprise was the importance of leadership in teams and the overall strong commitment of individual members to the team. Our preconception was that new venture teams shared leadership and that commitment was rather loose with blurred boundaries. We also observed the need to increase the frequency of our interaction and data collections with the teams to better observe teamwork. Teamwork is often rhythmized by the schedule of the workweek specific to the team. For example, some teams kick-off the Monday

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with an early meeting setting new goals and sharing tasks and responsibilities for the week, Thereafter, the members work more or less independently to report back on progress at a closing meeting on Friday. This would be the case for a team in the process of developing a product. Other teams had also more fluent schedules much more reactive to stakeholders' demands, because things were not yet set and interacting as much as possible to define demands was a primordial task. Teams seems to vary substantially in how they organized work based on tasks to be achieved but also team preferences for how to organize work.

During the pilot, we were not able to see a strong connection between teamwork and outcomes. We identified two potential design reasons for this absence of relationship. First, the venture teams we observed did not progress much within a period of three to six months. While they worked more or less intensively, it is also difficult to observe an important change in progress or achievement of important milestones. Second, with few observations and several months apart, it was difficult to really open up the black box of teamwork. Teamwork apparently needed to be observed more intensively to yield a better understanding. This made us rethink our design for the main study in terms of the length of the period of observations and the intensity of observation.

The main qualitative study. After the pilot study, five separate qualitative case studies have been initiated. Given the inductive nature of case study data, these five studies are managed as separate projects, each with its unique design and sample. The different studies focus on different topics related to new venture teamwork, such as psychological ownership, trust, conflict, team formation and action/transition processes. In the following, we discuss one of these projects as an illustrative example of the study design principles we have applied.

For this particular study, we selected three teams in the IT sector who participated in an accelerator program between the months of October 2016 and May 2017. These three teams constitute the entire cohort of firms for that period. Our data encompass regular

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interviews with team members as well as personality tests of all core team members as well as the coaches from the accelerator program. In addition, we made videotaped recordings of team members' interactions in meetings and in the office and we collected documents, such as business reports, lean canvases or investor presentations from the three teams. One team used Slack, an on-line chat platform, and for this team we were granted access to the online team conversations in this platform. Six month after the study was completed, we engaged in follow-up interviews the three teams. To analyze this rich data, we follow established guidelines for inductive theorizing from process data (e.g. Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Langley, 1999; Langley et al., 2013).

This study design offers several advantages for advancing our understanding of team processes in new ventures and helps to remedy some of the problems we encountered in the pilot study. First, we purposefully sampled three cases that were sufficiently similar in their compositional and economic characteristics to allow for cross-case comparison. The three cases shared similar compositional characteristics; operated a similar type of business and had similar short-term (gain investor capital) and long-term (grow the firm and then sell it to an investor) goals. By seeking similarity in these contextual elements, we hoped to be able to isolate differences in teamwork. In this way, the cases can be treated almost like real-life experiments, allowing us to compare and contrast across cases (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Second, we collected data with sufficient frequency to be able to observe how team processes unfolded in relation to positive and negative events that the teams experienced. In the study described above, we collected data every 3rd-5th week. In a later qualitative project, we even expanded the frequency of observations, following one single case once a week over three months. From our preliminary analyses, we note that a high frequency in observations is

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necessary to gain the type of rich, contextual understanding that is the strength of a qualitative data.

Third, we decided to not only rely on interviews and real-time observations, but to also collect video-based observation data. Although seldom used, this type of video-based qualitative data can be helpful for studying teams (Christianson, Forthcoming; Kauffeld & Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012). In our case, it allows us to re-visit our team meeting observations, coding nuances in team members' interactions that we did not always note in the moment. Finally, we see a lot of potential in unobtrusive data collection of team members interactions, such as online chat logs. This type of data provides the sufficient frequency and quantity to engage in novel, more qualitatively oriented techniques for inductive theory building (Luciano, Mathieu, Park, & Tannenbaum, forthcoming). At the same time, it also raises novel methodological and ethical challenges. We believe that addressing these challenges is an important future task for management and entrepreneurship research.

 General impressions from the two studies

Based on insights gleaned during project initiation, negotiation with stakeholders, we witness a strong gendering effect in the incubators favoring male behavior and masculine attributes. In all teams in both the quantitative and in the qualitative pilot studies, men predominate as members. Out of all the teams in the pilot, only two teams are female-led. In both studies, the lion share of the coaches and mentors were men. At this early stage, we do not know if this gendering is incubator specific. However, this gendering effect will have an effect on results and theory developed as it will reflect a context where few women participate. This introduce also a bias as we will have little information of how mixed gender team or teams dominated by women work together in teams. We know that male only teams behave differently than mixed or female only teams (Bear & Woolley, 2011). This means that

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our results are likely to suffer from an important limit and studies interested in gender differences in gender homophilous or mixed-gender team may need to oversample teams with women. It also motivates further research attentive to the selection and self-selection of male-dominated entrepreneurial teams to incubator environments, and research attentive to the overall gender discourse in technology-intensive entrepreneurship (Lee & Huang, 2018).

We also note that incubators differ substantially in their approach towards their start-ups. The incubators set different objectives (early sales, raising capital, teamwork, survival), use different tools for training (pitching, lean methods, business plans), have access to different sorts of coaches and experts and differ in their focus on ventures in terms of industries and technologies, and the professional experience of the entrepreneurs (age and professional background). We therefore tried to take care in our sampling for the quantitative study to have a sufficient number of teams per incubator to control for these effects in the analysis. For the qualitative part, differences such as which incubator program the venture team subscribes too, are less dramatic, but these differences is likely to affect teamwork and the venture process.

<a> Discussion

In this chapter, we have described a longitudinal project intended to advance research on the new venture process by connecting teamwork to firms' innovation outcomes. If we do not fully understand how teamwork develops in the context of new ventures, scholarly understanding of innovation drivers in new firms is incomplete, with the risk of policy initiatives and entrepreneurship education being suboptimal or even counterproductive.

We define a new venture team as two or more individuals who commit to each other, who interact dynamically, interdependently and adaptively (Salas et al., 1992) to create a new firm with specific goals, boundaries and coordinated systems of activities (Aldrich, 1999). We

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have define teamwork as how members work together and how that work affect team members' ability to collectively convert resources into meaningful and desired outcomes. Hence, we broaden our research focus from those that own equity and decide to those that also work together to bring the venture to reality. We highlight interdependence, adaptiveness and dynamism among team members to negotiate, coordinate and achieve desired outcomes by working together. Teamwork is dependent by power, dependence, norms and roles (Thibaut, 1986). Power, dependence, norms and rules change with how the team develops, hence, we introduce time as an important moderator. The further investigations of these concepts in entrepreneurship, and specifically new venture teams open up for new interesting avenues to develop knowledge of hopefully practical value.

Studying teams in a new venture context also has to potential to advance team research, where much work has been done in the context of large and established organizations where the link between team processes and organizational outcomes is distant and blurred by many contextual factors (Mathieu et al. 2008: 415–420). In a new venture, the link between team processes and outcome is shorter and more direct. This allows us to form a more precise understanding of the connection between processes going on in teams and the innovation and other outcomes (Cook, Campbell, & Day, 1979). In a new venture, the context in terms of task, resources and team composition is different from large and established organizations (Ruef, 2010). New venture teams often lack the experience, they are high in homophily (Ruef, Aldrich, & Carter, 2003), lack resources and face high uncertainty (Baillon, Bleichrodt, Liu, & Wakker, 2016; Engel, Kaandorp, & Elfring, 2017; Koudstaal, Sloof, & Praag, 2016). The factors are likely to be important moderators of teamwork on desired team outcomes.

We hope to advance research on the entrepreneurship process by connecting teamwork to firms' innovation and performance outcomes. Our project is yielding a unique longitudinal

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set of both qualitative and quantitative data, which is much needed in order to further advance research on new ventures. Such research is of interest to both entrepreneurship and team scholars because of our emphasis on teamwork developing over time in a specific context. We have presented a project detailing how we can advance research on new venture teamwork. We have presented the main arguments behind our theoretical, methodological and measurement considerations. We have argued that our theories and methods should better acknowledge teamwork to be a systemic process which occurs through interdependent relationships among members, and across multiple levels of analysis (including time). We not only acknowledge the complexity of this multilevel time-bound system but also try to address that complexity through empirical research. Such research poses stronger demands on data than what extant research typically has offered. We have argued for and presented longitudinal and multilevel research designs. Such designs allow us to collect data with sufficient frequency and duration to accurately model how new venture teams and their teamwork develops and changes in context and as they operate in complex systems (cf., Mathieu et al., 2017).

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Table 1 Participating Schools and researchers

	Country	Affiliation	Name
1	Sweden	Lund University	Frédéric Delmar
2	Sweden	Lund University	Anna Brattström
3	Sweden	Lund University	Lee Tso Choi
4	Sweden	Lund University	Rebecka Persson
5	Sweden	Lund University	Martin Bäckström
5	Sweden	Linköping University	Karl Wennberg
6	Sweden	Linköping University	Olga Yttermyr
7	Sweden	Chalmers	Tomas Karlsson
8	Sweden	Chalmers	Pamela Nowell
9	Sweden/Denmark	Stockholm School of Economics	Rui Lu
10	Sweden	Jönköping International Business School	Karin Hellerstedt
11	Sweden/Norway	Nord University	Alan Johnson
12	Russia	Graduate School of Management	Galina Shirokova
13	Russia	Graduate School of Management	Anastasia Laskovaya
14	China/France	ESCP	Yi Jiang