

Translating Knowledge into Innovation Dynamics

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CALL FOR ABSTRACTS – IFKAD 2024

Special Track n.: 03

Research Area: Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Translating Knowledge into Innovation and Entrepreneurial Dynamics in Family Firms

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Description

Knowledge management – i.e., the process through which knowledge is created, acquired, stored, shared, and applied (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Lee et al., 2012) – has received a lot of attention from prior research for its impact on various entrepreneurial outcomes, such as innovation, internationalization, financial performances, and growth (Darroch & McNaughton, 2002; Deligianni et al., 2015; Fang et al., 2018; Gu et al., 2017; Martinez-Conesa et al., 2017). In particular, considering that the innovation process involves searching and recombining knowledge in novel ways to produce new products (Fleming, 2001; Savino et al., 2017), knowledge is a fundamental antecedent of innovative endeavors (Del Giudice & Della Peruta, 2016; Ganguly et al., 2019). Nonetheless, knowledge is also important for entrepreneurial initiatives that go beyond innovation, such as starting new ventures. Indeed, the entrepreneurship literature has highlighted, for instance, the importance of technological and market knowledge to achieve better start-up performance (Clarysse et al., 2011; Sullivan & Marvel, 2011), and how specific knowledge developed during prior venturing experience may facilitate organizations and individuals in the identification and exploitation of new market opportunities (Lattacher & Wdowiak, 2020; Minniti & Bygrave, 2001).

However, this extensive body of research has primarily focused on the study of large corporations with dispersed ownership while mostly overlooking the study of other types of businesses such as family firms, which, on average, are also smaller in size (Arzubiaga et al., 2022; Querbach et al., 2022). This is surprising considering that the idiosyncratic governance structure of family firms may result in distinctive characteristics of their knowledge management processes that can, in turn, influence their innovative and entrepreneurial

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performance (Ge & Campopiano, 2022; Su & Daspit, 2021). For instance, family firms are unique in their ability to generate tacit knowledge thanks to the long-lasting involvement and longer tenure of family members (Lee et al., 2003; Sirmon & Hitt, 2003). Similarly, family firms have an unmatched capability to transfer such tacit knowledge among the family members thanks to their close ties (Cunningham et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2013), although this may also have some drawbacks such as overlooking the opportunities offered by external knowledge exchange (Brinkerink, 2018; Patel & Fiet, 2011). Furthermore, by being deeply rooted in traditions, family businesses are also especially capable of storing old knowledge and then applying it for innovation purposes (De Massis et al., 2016). Finally, addressing this gap is important because family firms account for two-thirds of all businesses worldwide, generate approximately 70–90% of annual global GDP, and create 50–80% of jobs in the majority of countries (De Massis et al., 2018). Thus, a better understanding of their knowledge management processes and how these lead to innovation and entrepreneurial activities may help them prosper with positive consequences for the society as a whole.

Notwithstanding, except for a few recent studies (Chirico & Salvato, 2016; Mostafiz et al., 2022; Rondi & Rovelli, 2021), hardly any research has directly and explicitly addressed the multiple facets of knowledge management and its potential outcomes within the specific context of family firm. For the above reasons, the goal of this thematic track is to advance our understanding of knowledge management and its relationship with innovation and entrepreneurship in family firms. We invite both conceptual and empirical papers, as well as we welcome different theoretical lens and methods. Following are some potential research themes and questions that contributions may address:

How do family owners and managers impact knowledge management processes in family firms and how do family ownership and management influence the relationship between knowledge and innovation?

- How do family members exchange knowledge across generations? What individual, family, and/or firm-related factors foster transgenerational knowledge exchange? Are there any specific situations in which transgenerational knowledge exchange may not be beneficial for innovation or new entrepreneurial activities?
- Which are the knowledge management practices that can foster innovation through tradition in family firms? Are there any contextual factors that may influence innovation through tradition in family firms? Can innovation through tradition be a superior innovation strategy to achieve superior entrepreneurial performance (e.g., internationalization)?
- How do family non-financial goals relate to knowledge management processes in family firms? Do they ultimately impact innovation and entrepreneurial outcomes?
- What are the micro-foundations of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, and knowledge acquisition in family firms?
- What are the differences in the knowledge-sharing process among family employees vs. family and non-family employees? How can these differences impact innovation and entrepreneurial performance?

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Keywords

Family Firms, Family Business, Knowledge Management, Innovation, Entrepreneurship

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Guidelines

Researchers wishing to contribute are invited to submit an **EXTENDED ABSTRACT** (in editable MS-Word format) of **min 500 and max 1000 words** by **15 JANUARY 2024**, using the submission procedure available on the website. The abstract should address theoretical background, research objective, methodology, and results in terms of expected contribution to Knowledge Management theory and practice. Authors are required to follow the guidelines for both extended abstracts as well as full papers available on IFKAD site: www.ifkad.org

Important dates

15 January 2024	<i>Extended Abstract submission deadline</i>
10 February 2024	<i>Acceptance notification to authors</i>
30 March 2024	<i>Early-Bird registration cut off</i>
10 April 2024	<i>Full paper submission deadline</i>
20 May 2024	<i>Registration deadline</i>
12-14 June 2024	<i>Conference sessions</i>

For further information

For any information related to the event, please see the event website at www.ifkad.org or contact the conference manager at info@ifkad.org