7-26-2023

Managing Goal Heterogeneity in Strategic Initiatives

Erim Ergene

Steven Floyd

Seray Ergene

Long Range Planning 56 (2023) 102344

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Long Range Planning

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/lrp

Managing goal heterogeneity in strategic initiatives

Erim Ergene[a,*], Steven Floyd[b,1], Seray Ergene[c]

[a] College of Business, Bryant University, Smithfield, RI, USA
[b] Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA, USA
[c] College of Business, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Strategy process
Strategic initiatives
Goals
Decision comprehensiveness
Strategic consensus
Organizational control
Intraorganizational ecology

ABSTRACT

Strategic initiatives are temporary group undertakings designed to renew organizational capabilities and are crucial to organizational performance. Despite the inherent goal heterogeneity stemming from individual, departmental, organizational, and initiative levels, research conceptualizes goals as unitary within the team. Our objective is to explore ways to manage goal heterogeneity for the successful development of strategic initiatives within the intraorganizational context. We argue that organizational controls and decision comprehensiveness can be effective in mitigating the negative effects of heterogeneity. This will help facilitate a group of individuals in behaving as a team and being committed to the agreed-upon task at hand. We also articulate the positive role of strategic consensus in moving initiatives in the resource allocation process. Our theory building provides a roadmap for managing strategic initiatives in the resource allocation process and contributes to research on strategic initiatives and goals and, more broadly, to behavioral theory.

1. Introduction

Strategic initiatives are temporary ventures undertaken by groups of individuals spanning hierarchical and departmental boundaries (Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010a). They are designed to add or renew organizational capabilities through projects focused on new product development, capital investment, operational efficiency, or market growth (Floyd and Wooldridge, 2000; Lechner and Floyd, 2012). Consequently, they are vital in the quest for competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Nag et al., 2007; Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010b). However, strategic initiatives often fail (CGMA, 2016; Kreutzer et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2016), and research suggests that one of the crucial factors that affect their development, survival, and success is goals (Burgelman, 1983; Voyer, 1994; Kaplan, 2008; Bidwell, 2012; De Clercq et al., 2013; Kreutzer et al., 2015). Goals help individuals, teams, and organizations perform better (e.g., Kristof-Brown and Stevens, 2001; Kellermanns et al., 2011; De Clercq et al., 2013) but also negatively impact outcomes by introducing politics and conflict (e.g., Guth and MacMillan, 1986; Dean and Sharfman, 1996; Kreutzer et al., 2015). Unfortunately, despite goals' crucial role in initiative development, most strategic initiative research is silent on the potential impact of goal heterogeneity, except for studies on the political behavior that surrounds strategic initiatives (e.g., Lechner and Floyd, 2012; Kreutzer et al., 2015; Dörrenbächer and Gammelgaard, 2016).

Goals are typically not investigated for their specific influence and an integrative perspective is missing in the literature.

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: eergene@bryant.edu (E. Ergene), serayergene@uri.edu (S. Ergene).
[1] Professor Floyd passed away in October 2022.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2023.102344
Received 3 August 2021; Received in revised form 11 June 2023; Accepted 3 July 2023
Available online 4 July 2023

Specifically, when goals are discussed in the context of strategic initiatives, researchers usually make one of two choices. Either they define the initiative team as a cohesive whole and assume that the individuals involved share common goals and work for the same outcomes (e.g., Li et al., 2007; Lechner et al., 2010; Lechner and Floyd, 2012) or alternatively, when exploring intrateam environments, heterogeneous goals are reduced to proxies, such as functional heterogeneity (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992; Keller, 2001; Lovelace et al., 2001). Moreover, this issue extends beyond strategic initiatives; goal heterogeneity remains an underexplored feature of the behavioral theory of the firm (Argote and Greve, 2007; Gavetti et al., 2012; Kotlar et al., 2018; Linder and Foss, 2018). Given the power of goals in explaining individual, group, and organizational behavior, we find this surprising.

To address this silence in the literature, our goal in this study is to explore the impact of goal heterogeneity on the progression of a strategic initiative in the resource allocation process. We begin by focusing on the effects of goal heterogeneity on team consensus and commitment to the initiative task at hand. Both team consensus and commitment to the initiative task are instrumental in getting the group of individuals to work as a "team." Our fundamental argument is that goal heterogeneity will negatively impact team consensus and commitment, both of which are vital for moving the initiative further along the developmental pipeline in the resource allocation process. However, decision comprehensiveness and organizational controls can play a crucial role in dampening the negative effects of goal heterogeneity on team consensus and commitment. Finally, while an initiative that garners consensus and commitment from its team members is more likely to be successful in the resource allocation process, strategic consensus can provide additional support to move the initiative toward final implementation. Strategic consensus is intricately related to organizational goals and will enable the initiative to gain additional support and be framed from a perspective that the dominant coalition will find acceptable.

With this paper, we contribute to the literature on strategic renewal by explaining how goal heterogeneity in strategic initiative teams could be managed in order to survive and advance in the resource allocation process. Specifically, we investigate the outcomes stemming from heterogeneous goals, integrating team-level cognitive and motivational elements with intraorganizational factors (Linder and Foss, 2018) fitting with the literature's calls for multi-level approaches (Humphrey and Aime, 2014; Mathieu et al., 2017; Raveendran et al., 2020). Our theoretical exploration illustrates how the assumption of a homogenous team with regards to goals might misrepresent conclusions from team-level studies. Overall, our model provides a roadmap to managers in order to utilize organizational controls, decision comprehensiveness, and strategic consensus as potential levers to improve initiative performance in the intraorganizational context.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Strategic initiatives and performance

Strategic initiatives are temporary group undertakings that have the potential to add, renew, and alter organizational capabilities and impact organizational performance (Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010a; Lechner and Floyd, 2012). Strategic initiatives can be deliberate or emergent, top-down or bottom-up, autonomous or induced, and exploratory or exploitative; regardless, they form the basis for strategy formation in an organization (Noda and Bower, 1996; Lovas and Ghoshal, 2000; Nag et al., 2007). They take on many forms, such as projects related to new products and business development, capital investment, revenue growth, and operational improvement (Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010a; Lechner and Floyd, 2012).

Strategic initiatives have long been studied while utilizing the intraorganizational ecology perspective (Burgelman, 1991). This has been an influential framework in the literature, placing strategic initiatives at the core of strategic management (Burgelman, 1991; Lovas and Ghoshal, 2000; Burgelman and Grove, 2007; Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014; Canales, 2015). Viewing organizations as ecologies of initiatives, Burgelman suggests that "strategy results, in part, from selection and retention operating on internal variation associated with strategic initiatives" (1991; p. 240). According to this perspective, strategy is the outcome of a continuous and iterative process of resource allocation rather than grand and formalized statements relating to corporate strategy (Noda and Bower, 1996). This incremental process is best seen through the selection of strategic initiatives over time within the organization: projects from internal variation give way to the initial impetus, developed through several rounds of resource allocation, and ultimately full implementation. The theory building in this study is concerned with the stages following the initial impetus, specifically after an initiative moves from the idea stage and becomes a formal project.

Following this perspective, our dependent variable for the performance of an initiative is its success in the internal selection process, as identified by its movement in the resource allocation process. Initiatives are developed through an incremental process, governed by fit with the structural and strategic contexts (Burgelman, 1991; Noda and Bower, 1996) as well as feasibility within the internal and external environments (Canales, 2015). All else being equal, an initiative that meets the criteria set forth by the formal and informal intraorganizational context will likely be seen as potentially viable and important for the organization and as worthy of being pursued. This perspective implicitly underlies how extant research operationalizes the success of strategic initiatives. Many operationalizations of initiative performance include adhering to internal organizational expectations and requirements, such as meeting budgets, schedules, or quality requirements (e.g., McGrath, 2001; Lechner et al., 2010; Garrett Jr. and Covin, 2015; Walter et al., 2016). This operationalization demonstrates that meeting organizational objectives and expectations is intrinsically a part of success, and it can be directly inferred that meeting such criteria will allow the initiative to be developed even further.

It is important to note that an initiative that moves within the resource allocation process will not necessarily be successful when exposed to external forces, such as when a new product is launched. The intraorganizational ecology framework suggests that initiative performance is a fit between the successful implementation of the initiative content and the content meeting external demands (Burgelman, 1991; Lovas and Ghoshal, 2000). Environmental demands may require certain actions, such as increasing efficiency or sales, and the ultimate success of the initiative will depend on fulfilling these demands. Our scope does not include this "external" performance conceptualization; rather it is on the movement of the initiative within the internal environment, which is a necessary but not sufficient condition for performance.

2.2. Strategic initiatives and goals

The influence of goals on strategic initiatives and their development has not garnered much interest in the literature. This is not necessarily surprising: while multiple goals and their potential conflicts are a major part of the behavioral theory of the firm (Cyert and March 1963; Simon, 1964), the heterogeneity of goals is not directly addressed within most research following behavioral theory in general and strategic initiative research in particular. Much of the research surrounding goals falls under the umbrella of organizational politics (Gavetti et al., 2012; Weber and Waeger, 2017). In other words, heterogeneous goals are seen as a precursor of political behavior, and in this perspective, literature has developed without focusing on the goals themselves.

Empirical investigations show that political behavior stemming from heterogeneous goals has negative consequences for initiatives. For example, individuals and groups resist change and attempt to redirect, delay, and even sabotage the implementation of actions that run counter to their own goals (Guth and MacMillan, 1986; Jarzabkowski and Balogun, 2009). Political behavior is argued to have a negative impact on decision-making effectiveness (Dean and Sharfman, 1996), the development of shared values (Hitt et al., 1999), and performance (Kreutzer et al., 2015). Inversely, attempting to understand and have concern for the goals of others is associated with positive outcomes, such as having a problem-solving orientation (Nauta et al., 2002), which improves coordination and performance (St. John and Rue, 1991) as well as decision quality (Shepherd et al., 2020).

Research shows that goals play a significant role in strategic initiative development. For instance, individuals have their own goals that motivate them to propose and champion initiatives (De Dreu and Nauta, 2009; De Clercq et al., 2011). Strategic initiatives are group undertakings that operate across functions and departments. Thus, individuals' departmental goals can influence the types of tasks undertaken (Markham, 2000; Kaplan, 2008; Ethiraj et al., 2012) as well as their developmental progress (Voyer, 1994). Importantly, organizational goals and priorities may or may not align with the goals of departments, coalitions, or other parties (Simon, 1964). Whether these organizational goals are actually negotiated and agreed upon by groups in the organization, as Cyert and March (1963) suggested, is not a given, especially in times of change; such negotiation and agreement might be lacking among groups in an organization (Huy, 2002; Davis and Eisenhardt, 2011).

2.3. Strategic consensus, commitment, and team consensus

Strategic consensus is a foundational construct when discussing organizational goals. One of the earliest topics of strategy process research, literature on strategic consensus initially had two underlying assumptions: it was argued to be about agreement on goals and the means of accomplishing those goals (Bourgeois, 1980, 1985; Dess, 1987; West Jr. and Schwenk, 1996), and it was predominantly investigated within the top management of the firm, seen as the dominant coalition (Cyert and March 1963). This conceptualization has pushed for new research yet often yielding conflicting results, especially for performance implications (Priem, 1990).

In a series of papers, Floyd and Wooldridge argued for an alternative perspective that noted that due to the incremental nature of decision-making, it was not possible to reach a complete agreement on all objectives and means (Wooldridge and Floyd, 1989, 1990; Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992). These authors also proposed that limiting the discussion to top management was misguided; rather, an organizational agreement and commitment across hierarchical levels on general strategic goals and priorities would provide a better direction for the organization. This is justified because middle managers are positioned to both formulate and implement strategic initiatives. As such, the focus of strategic consensus shifted away from an objectives-means distinction to strategic priorities, and more studies that looked at consensus among the top management team as well as the organization's different hierarchical positions followed. While conflicting findings exist, there is evidence that strategic consensus helps improve organizational performance (Kellermanns et al., 2011).

The definition of strategic consensus has changed over the years; a common definition that continues to be utilized is by Kellermanns et al. (2005), who define it as "the shared understanding of strategic priorities among managers at the top, middle, and/or operating levels of the organization" (p. 721). While previous definitions combined shared understanding with commitment to a course of action (Wooldridge and Floyd, 1989, 1990), recent research has utilized this conceptualization to separate commitment from the definition of strategic consensus (e.g., Walter et al., 2013; Tarakci et al., 2014; Ateş et al., 2020; Porck et al., 2020). Commitment to a strategic decision or action is crucial, but empirical evidence shows that commitment and shared understanding do not necessarily go hand in hand, and treating these constructs as independent entities is warranted (Kellermanns et al., 2005; Bragaw and Misangyi, 2022).

Recently, Bragaw and Misangyi (2022) argued that strategic consensus, as defined by Kellermanns et al. (2005), confounds decision makers within the literature. There are those who follow Kellermanns et al. (2005) and argue that the scope of actors within strategic consensus is across the hierarchy – for example, a recent set of papers by Ateş, Porck, Tarakci and colleagues follow this tradition (Tarakci et al., 2014; Ateş et al., 2020; Porck et al., 2020; Porck and van Knippenberg, 2022). At the same time, the original conceptualization of strategic consensus was related to within-team agreement on organizational priorities, but that team was the top management team (e.g., Bourgeois, 1980; Priem, 1990; West Jr. and Schwenk, 1996). Others within the broad consensus literature utilized similar within-team conceptualizations, both with (e.g., Ensley and Pearson, 2005; Ramos-Garza, 2009) and without (e.g., Bowman and Ambrosini, 1997; Dooley et al., 2000; Roberto, 2004) top management teams as the context.

We agree with Bragaw and Misangyi (2022) that the discussion of strategic consensus in the literature has not always been consistent. However, we decided to use the conceptualization of strategic consensus defined by Kellermanns et al. (2005) to better align with the literature. Thus, we adopted their definition while acknowledging that consensus does not need to occur only across managers at different levels. As Bragaw and Misangyi (2022) note, "strategic consensus occurs when all the deciding social actors … accept the strategic decision" (p. 671). Following Bragaw and Misangyi (2022), we separate agreements on strategic priorities by managers across the organizational hierarchy from agreements on a set of issues related to the strategic initiative by the team members. As such, we separate strategic consensus from *team consensus*, which we define as a shared understanding among strategic initiative team members regarding strategic issues pertaining to the initiative.

The presence of strategic consensus indicates that there is a shared understanding of organizational goals across the hierarchy. Thus, strategic consensus must be considered for its effects on the strategic initiative team's performance, an environment in which various goals might be present. However, within the initiative's context, team consensus and commitment to the initiative task must constitute the starting points because those members might be pursuing goals that may not align with the initiative task. An agreement on the task is required to move forward by deciding and implementing the actions necessary to accomplish the task. When there is no agreement on the main task, the team ceases to be a "team" (Hambrick, 1994). In the same fashion, commitment to that task is a necessary requirement for individuals on the team. It enables team members to exert effort in a continued and motivated manner (Klein et al., 2012). Hence, our first group of propositions will begin with an investigation of how goal heterogeneity impacts team success, consensus, and commitment.

3. Theory development and propositions

3.1. Goal heterogeneity in the initiative team

We begin our theoretical arguments with the recognition that the heterogeneity of goals in a strategic initiative team can stem from various sources. We expect individuals, in a cross-functional setting such as the strategic initiative, to act on behalf of themselves as well as their departments. This argument is in line with the rest of the literature on teams: cross-functional members bring expertise to their new environments, improve decision quality, and facilitate communication across departmental boundaries (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992; Tekleab et al., 2016), but they also influence team processes through social categorization and political behavior (Hitt et al., 1999). Moreover, as discussed earlier, the goals of individuals and departments can impact the variation and selection of initiatives in the intraorganizational ecology. The literature shows that being against an initiative for personal or departmental reasons is just as likely as in the case of supporting it (e.g., Voyer, 1994; Markham, 2000; De Clercq et al., 2011). Thus, there can be different goal configurations within the team regarding individual and departmental goals and preferences with respect to the initiative goal itself. In this study, we do not necessarily discuss a complete range of potential configurations for different goal heterogeneity types. Rather, we would like to acknowledge these different sources of goals and discuss two cases: a homogeneous team and a heterogeneous team.

A homogeneous team with regard to individual and departmental goals indicates that members are similar with respect to their stances toward the initiative. Let us say that the initiative at hand is a growth initiative that aims to expand the availability of products to Latin America from their existing manufacturing plant in the US. Members of this team may come from the marketing, operations, and production departments. They will attempt to solve several problems, such as ensuring that the product is viable for customers in Latin America, that in-house production specs adhere to the regulations in the new markets, and that partners for logistics and distribution could be found. In a homogeneous team, members representing these three departments will agree that the initiative's main goal – to expand to a different geographical market – is worthy of pursuit and aligns with their own goals. Their reasons and motivations for the support might come from different sources: they might think that it is good for the company to expand, that it is good for their department to have more responsibility, or that they are in line for a leadership position once expansion happens. Regardless of the motivation, members supported the initiative. Note that we provided an example of a homogeneous team that is supportive of the initiative. It is possible that members are homogeneously unsupportive of the initiative, but that would be very unlikely, and we would categorize such a team as a heterogenous team due to the goal heterogeneity that exists between team members and the initiative goal itself.

On the other hand, a heterogeneous team, with regard to individual and departmental goals, would indicate that members are mixed in their support for the initiative's goal. Taking the above example, the marketing and production departments may agree with the initiative's goal and think that they can produce and market viable products in a new location. However, the operations department might think that the costs, logistics, and distribution of these products would pose significant issues, and if new markets are deemed necessary for growth, the focus should be on outsourcing and/or expanding manufacturing operations to Latin America. In this case, heterogeneity exists in the team regarding the goals that are represented.

3.2. Goal heterogeneity and initiative performance

First, we provide a baseline proposition that can be perceived as an assumption on which the rest of the arguments depend. Examining the body of work related to goal heterogeneity, there is significant evidence that suggests that alignment and homogeneity of goals is desirable. The congruence of personal and team goals has a positive impact on individual and team performance (Kristof-Brown and Stevens, 2001; Colbert et al., 2008; Yan and Dooley, 2013). Team mental models, or a shared understanding of goals and tasks, improve team effectiveness (Kozlowski and Bell, 2013), and teams that require interdependence in tasks benefit from goal alignment (Humphrey and Aime, 2014; Raveendran et al., 2020). Having shared goals among departments improves performance (St. John and Rue, 1991), whereas goal differences increase conflict (Nauta and Sanders, 2001). At the organizational level, having shared goals across the hierarchy helps improve organizational performance (Kellermanns et al., 2011).

Strategic initiatives are developed in a political environment, requiring resources, support, and legitimacy. Fit with the concept of strategy signals support from organizational coalitions (Lechner et al., 2010): gaining support from the rest of the organization is crucial for initiative development (Lechner and Floyd, 2012), and alignment of initiative goals with strategic priorities eases this requirement. Conversely, divergent strategic initiatives are more likely to face difficulties in their implementation (Maritan, 2001; Lechner and Floyd, 2012; Walter et al., 2016). Research also suggests strategic initiatives that do not conform to stated organizational goals need legitimation and require the initiative to be constructed as fitting the concept of strategy for successful emergence (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014).

Overall, research shows that having homogeneous goals across different levels, such as individual-supervisor, individual-team, department-department, department-organization, or initiative-organization, all lead to performance benefits. Given these conditions regarding the dependent variable and the developmental stage of the initiative, the heterogeneity of goals would not be a desirable condition for initiative success in the internal environment. When individuals and departments do not have a common cause, it is unlikely that they will work toward the initiative objective in cohesion or harness their social networks to build coalitions and gain access to the resources needed to accomplish the initiative goal. As such.

Proposition 1. *Multi-level (initiative, individual, departmental, organizational) goal heterogeneity is detrimental for strategic initiative success in the internal environment.*

3.3. Goal heterogeneity, team consensus, and commitment

Our second set of propositions begins with the notion that heterogeneous goals in a team are likely to have negative effects on that team. We know that heterogeneity reduces team effectiveness and cooperation and increases conflict (Kozlowski and Bell, 2013; Humphrey and Aime, 2014). While much of this research has focused on demographic and surface-level diversity variables, there is evidence that goal heterogeneity impacts a team's level of shared understanding and commitment to a certain course of action. For example, in explaining the notion of behavioral integration (Hambrick, 1994; Simsek et al., 2005), Hambrick notes that top management teams often are not actually "teams" but, rather, groups of individuals with individual agendas and goals. Hambrick argues – and Simsek and colleagues confirm – that behaving as a team requires certain team-level processes, and team-level differences in goal preferences can affect these processes, negatively limiting the level of cooperation, joint decision-making, and information exchange.

With heterogeneous goals, team members are likely to follow their individual and departmental agendas and prioritize those in the decision-making process. When decisions are made, it is likely that the commitment of the team to a course of action will be affected by the individuals' level of agreement with that course of action. Thus, when the team members are heterogeneous with respect to their goals, it is likely that commitment to a course of action will be negatively impacted. With respect to shared understanding, no direct link has been identified between goal heterogeneity and consensus in the team. However, there are many findings that link heterogeneity and diversity in teams with a lack of consensus (Priem, 1990; Knight et al., 1999; Kellermanns et al., 2005) and that show that the mechanism of this negative effect act through behavioral mediators such as conflict and agreement seeking (Knight et al., 1999). Indirect examinations of goal heterogeneity and consensus have also shown negative correlations in studies (e.g., Shepherd et al., 2020). Overall, we expect that goal heterogeneity will negatively influence commitment to a course of action as well as team consensus.

Proposition 2a. *Goal heterogeneity in a strategic initiative team will negatively impact team consensus.*

Proposition 2b. *Goal heterogeneity in a strategic initiative team will negatively impact commitment.*

What mitigates these negative effects? Based on past research, it can be expected that a team lacking shared understanding and commitment to a course of action – two important elements for teamwork – will likely fail. Although research has argued that certain levels of dissent and conflict may help in decision-making, extreme levels are unlikely to be helpful for success (Priem et al., 1995; de Wit et al., 2012). Thus, it is imperative to maintain a level of shared understanding and commitment in the strategic initiative team, an environment that is likely to be composed of differing goal stances. Next, we introduce decision comprehensiveness and organizational controls, which we argue play a role in minimizing the negative effects of goal heterogeneity on these two key elements needed for successful initiative development. These are two processes that could crucially be used as levers by the team and their leaders to overcome the negative effects stemming from heterogeneous goals.

3.4. Mitigating the negative effects of goal heterogeneity

Decision comprehensiveness is the rationality in the decision-making processes of an organization, that is, the extent to which decisions are the result of an exhaustive and inclusive analytical process (Fredrickson, 1984; Fredrickson and Mitchell, 1984). The literature has shown great interest in this concept, arguing that the comprehensiveness of decision-making processes helps teams and organizations make better decisions, leading to better outcomes (e.g., Forbes, 2007; Baer et al., 2013). When an organization is viewed as an information processing system (Forbes, 2007; Heavey et al., 2009; Alexiev et al., 2020), the level of decision comprehensiveness that occurs during the development of an initiative becomes even more crucial to investigate as strategic initiatives are often developed under considerable uncertainty, risk, and complexity (Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010a).

Both theoretical arguments and empirical investigations show that the effects of comprehensiveness could be contingent on contextual factors, especially when it comes to the availability and certainty of information in the external environment (e.g., Dean and Sharfman, 1996; Iaquinto and Fredrickson, 1997; Forbes, 2007; Heavey et al., 2009; Alexiev et al., 2020). Due to these contingencies as well as methodological differences and outcome operationalizations, conflicting findings have been found. In a recent meta-analysis, Samba et al. argued that comprehensiveness improves organizational outcomes only when subjective outcomes are used and cast doubt on many of the findings in the literature (2021). Despite this, Samba et al. have also been criticized for their methodological choices (Miller and McKee, 2021). More importantly, both sets of authors note the continued importance of decision comprehensiveness in an age in which access to data and tools for its analysis are ever more present (Miller and McKee, 2021; Samba et al., 2021).

We argue that a comprehensive decision-making process allows a team to overcome the potential negative effects of heterogeneous goals on coming to a shared understanding. A systematic approach that ensures that alternatives are discussed and evaluated, almost by definition, requires parties to voice their positions and concerns. Understanding the different positions of team members will allow the team to come to a shared understanding of the task at hand. This does not mean that team members will commit to courses of action; rather, it means a reduction in the heterogeneity of information sets and cognitive structures that cause ineffectiveness in strategic decision-making (Baer et al., 2013). Moreover, planning activities and comprehensiveness of decision-making help the formation of team mental models, which could also improve implementation efforts (Mohammed et al., 2010; Thomas and Ambrosini, 2015). Making sure that the decision-making process is comprehensive can help a team with heterogeneous goals in being "on the same page" and having a general shared understanding of the initiative at hand. Thus,

Proposition 3a. *Decision comprehensiveness will reduce the negative relationship between goal heterogeneity and team consensus.*

Control is a key organizational function in which managers play a central role (Cardinal et al., 2017). As one of the primary functions of management, organizational control plays a significant role in aligning the goals of individuals with the goals of the organization (Cardinal et al., 2004). Thus, it is a core function that should be examined when the process of strategic initiative development is investigated.

Several frameworks have been used to conceptualize organizational control (Cardinal et al., 2017); unlike earlier studies that suggest different types of control for different types of organizations (Ouchi, 1980), we utilize the framework proposed by Cardinal (2001), which aligns well with our conceptual arguments. Defining control as "any process by which managers direct attention, motivate, and encourage organizational members to act in desired ways to meet the firm's objectives" (2001; p. 22), Cardinal suggests that there are three formal controls: input, behavior, and outcome. Input controls focus on the inputs to a process or task, such as controls for specific human capital requirements required for a project. Behavior controls work toward increasing cooperation and assistance among members undertaking the task, whereas output controls are a "hands-off" means to track progress (Kreutzer et al., 2015).

While these controls are unique, recent research suggests that different control systems are complementary (Simons, 1991; Cardinal et al., 2004; Kreutzer et al., 2015). Specifically, Kreutzer et al. (2015) show that organizational controls can be instrumental in overcoming politicized environments, which tend to arise because of conflicting goals in the organization. They further suggest that behavioral and output controls could complement each other. Both control mechanisms have drawbacks; however, when implemented together, they provide maximum benefits, especially when the initiative team is operating in politicized environments. While this body of work focuses on formal controls, informal control mechanisms, such as culture, norms, and values, have also been found to play a complementary role alongside formal control mechanisms (Kreutzer et al., 2016). The team might have their own control mechanisms in the form of peer control but this is also influenced by formal and informal control mechanisms (Walter et al., 2021). Our discussion in this paper focuses mostly on formal behavior and output controls as they are defined as potential levers that organizational leaders might use for strategic change and renewal (Simons, 1991, 1994).

Organizational controls help align the goals of individuals with those of the organization (Cardinal et al., 2004). Various mechanisms may help this alignment, such as reward and punishment systems that benefit individuals for certain outcomes or rules, regulations, and procedures that employees are asked to follow (Cardinal, 2001; Kreutzer et al., 2015). Behavior controls, which provide organizational members with guidance and direction, outline acceptable and unacceptable work practices. Strategic initiatives are developed in a political environment in which organizational members might occasionally be less motivated to undertake the work at hand, becoming antagonists (Markham, 2000) or even saboteurs (Guth and MacMillan, 1986). Thus, the usage of behavior controls might limit the extent to which the heterogeneous goals of individuals in the team might behave in a way that does not support the initiative at hand. Output controls, on the other hand, do not emphasize such guidance and direction; rather, they focus on results and holding employees responsible for the outcomes that are produced. This might be well-fitting in uncertain environments, in which strategic initiatives are often developed, as means-ends relationships prove to be less visible. In such a case, output controls might provide the motivation to align individual and initiative goals to further one's expected rewards or thwart potential penalties.

We know that commitment to a course of action is reduced in teams with heterogeneous goals. However, organizational controls – specifically, behavior and outcome controls – can play a role in negating this effect. Controls help align individual and organizational goals by monitoring behavior and providing rewards and benefits. We note that both behavior and output controls have benefits and risks (Kreutzer et al., 2015, 2016): behavior controls are more likely to be effective in environments in which means-ends relationships are well understood, but they stifle employee discretion. Output controls emphasize the lack of an a priori direction in an uncertain environment that provides freedom. On the other hand, there are difficulties in quantifying appropriate output measures in such contexts, which might lead to the team undertaking unnecessary behaviors with a short-term focus. Thus, we expect both types of controls to simultaneously mitigate the effects of heterogeneous goals on commitment. Depending on the initiative and its developmental progress, one or the other may become more important at a given point in time. In sum, we believe that for a strategic initiative they will be complementary in the long term.

Proposition 3b. *Behavior and output controls, in tandem, will reduce the negative relationship between goal heterogeneity and commitment.*

3.5. Role of strategic consensus on initiative performance

We discussed the negative effects of goal heterogeneity on initiative success, as it could hurt the development of shared understanding and commitment within the team. One could argue that the notions of shared understanding of the tasks and being committed to solving those are the things that separate a "team" from a group of individuals and are thus necessary elements for success. As such, we do not necessarily see heterogeneous goals *directly* impacting team success in a negative manner, rather we see heterogeneous goals as precursors to a host of potential problems that can arise. With Propositions 3a and 3 b, we discussed the ways in which these problems can be mitigated.

The literature is consistent with this notion, as it has shown that within-team consensus and commitment generally improve team performance. Dooley et al. (2000) found that consensus and commitment both have direct positive effects on team success, although consensus also has a partially mediated positive effect through commitment. Shared understanding and shared cognition has been found to have positive effects on team effectiveness and performance (Mohammed et al., 2010; Kozlowski and Bell, 2013; Aubé et al., 2018), and in their review, Kozlowski and Bell (2013) note that task commitment helps teams perform better. Thus, both team consensus and commitment are expected to impact a strategic initiative team's success.

At the same time, strategic initiatives are complex undertakings, with tasks characterized by uncertainty and interdependence. Team actions as well as the forces in the intraorganizational ecology will impact an initiative's success. The development of strategic initiatives is political, with network ties, negotiations, and formal power all playing a role alongside the "rational" expectations of how an initiative may succeed (Pappas and Wooldridge, 2007; Lechner et al., 2010; Lechner and Floyd, 2012). In other words, the content of the initiative and the work that the members undertake will not be the sole reason why an initiative moves forward in the resource allocation process; intraorganizational forces will also play a role.

We propose strategic consensus as a way to discuss the amalgamation of such forces. As previously noted, strategic consensus refers to a shared understanding of strategic goals and priorities across the organizational hierarchy (Kellermanns et al., 2005). This conceptualization of consensus includes actors across the hierarchy, but the general assumption is that strategic goals and priorities are set by upper management or the dominant coalition (e.g., Bourgeois, 1980; Dess, 1987; Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992; Rapert et al., 1996; Walter et al., 2013). Inherent in this view is the notion that individuals, particularly middle managers, play an important role in the implementation of strategic actions; thus, their understanding of the concept of strategy is especially crucial. This is not to minimize the role that middle managers play in formulation (Wooldridge and Floyd, 1990; Burgelman, 1991; Floyd and Lane, 2000), but the dominant conceptualization of the importance of strategic consensus has noticeably highlighted the implementation role of certain organizational members.

Therefore, what role does strategic consensus play in the development and success of strategic initiatives marred by heterogeneous goals? We argue that strategic consensus has a moderating effect on the positive relationships among team consensus and initiative performance, and commitment and initiative performance. Shared understanding and commitment at the team level are necessary conditions for performance, yet they do not guarantee success within the organization. A high degree of strategic consensus indicates that the concept of strategy, priorities, and potentially acceptable actions are known to organizational members across the hierarchy. We expect team members to undertake the initiative to also have such an understanding of the priorities of the organization. With this knowledge, they will be more effective in translating their commitment and consensus into success.

Strategic consensus indicates a shared understanding of strategic priorities; it does not indicate commitment to those specific priorities. Understanding such strategic priorities will allow the team to utilize the appropriate analyses, measures, and data to justify the existence of initiatives, which will benefit the overall success of the initiative, regardless of whether its content is in line with the concept of strategy (Lechner and Floyd, 2012). Moreover, the literature shows that strategic consensus and organizational communication, which are crucial for moving an initiative in a political environment, have a positive relationship (Desmidt and George, 2016). Even for autonomous or disruptive change initiatives, legitimizing them within the organization requires a basic understanding of the prevailing concept of strategy (Cornelissen et al., 2011; Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014). The ability of the team to legitimize and

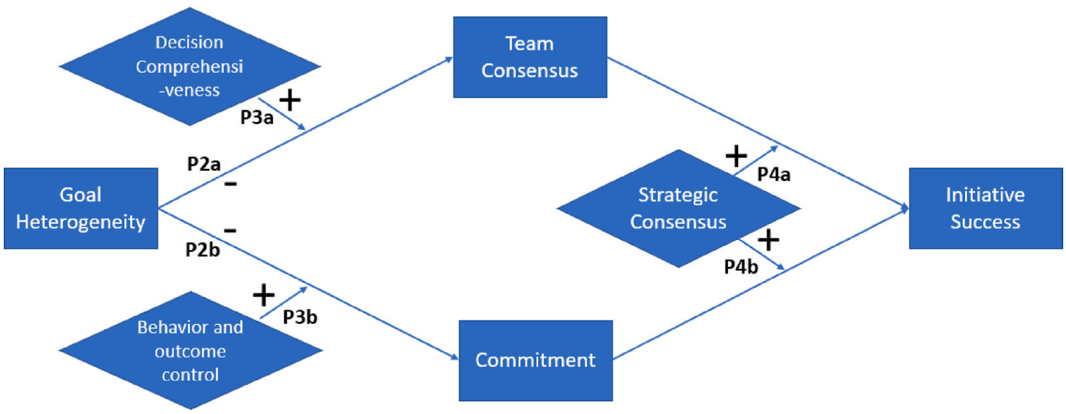

Fig. 1. Theoretical model (Propositions 2a-4b).

move the initiative will help increase the collective belief among members that the team could successfully achieve the task it set out to do (Chen et al., 2009), in turn, making them more committed (Kirkman and Rosen, 1999). Overall, strategic consensus will help initiative team members undertake actions that help move the initiative forward in the resource allocation process. A strategic initiative team that exhibits a shared understanding of and commitment to a task is expected to succeed, but strategic consensus elevates this likelihood. Hence,

Proposition 4a. *Strategic consensus will increase the positive relationship between team consensus and initiative performance.*

Proposition 4b. *Strategic consensus will increase the positive relationship between commitment and initiative performance.*

To summarize, we began our arguments with the baseline proposition 1 that heterogeneous goals at large harm initiative performance in the intraorganizational context. Our next set of propositions, 2a and 2b, highlights the negative impact of goal heterogeneity on team consensus and commitment to the initiative task, which are both crucial for effective "team" work. With propositions 3a and 3b, we argue that decision comprehensiveness and organizational control mechanisms can dampen the negative effects of goal heterogeneity on team consensus and commitment, respectively. Finally, with propositions 4a and 4b, we consider the role of strategic consensus in enhancing the positive impact of team consensus and commitment on strategic initiative team performance. Fig. 1 illustrates propositions 2a–4b.

4. Discussion and conclusions

In this study, we investigated how goal heterogeneity impacts initiative development and how it can be managed. We argue that the initiative team members can be homogeneous or heterogeneous in the goals that they pursue, and this diversity can impact the team's commitment and consensus regarding the initiative goal. We discuss the role that decision comprehensiveness and organizational controls can play in managing the negative effects stemming from heterogeneous goals. Finally, we examine the importance of strategic consensus in achieving high performance. In this section, we elaborate on the contributions and implications of the theory and practice.

The broad contribution of this study is to consider strategic initiative goals from a multi-level perspective. The literature that investigates strategic initiatives largely views the initiative team as a cohesive unit and considers its relationships with the rest of the organization (e.g., Markham, 2000; McGrath, 2001; Lechner and Floyd, 2012; Kreutzer et al., 2016). However, the goal heterogeneity represented within these temporary and cross-functional teams is largely missing in the literature, and it is unlikely that such a unitary view of the strategic initiative team is appropriate. For example, research on the social networks of strategic initiative teams (e.g., Pappas and Wooldridge, 2007; Kijkuit and van den Ende, 2010; Lechner et al., 2010) suggests that teams can influence and gain support from intraorganizational actors. However, while entities such as organizations or teams can be tied to one another, they are constituted of groups of individual actors (Carpenter et al., 2012). This realization begs the question: does the initiative team's ties to influential actors in the organization arise from a specific team member whose goals are aligned with the rest of the team? If a team has high levels of goal heterogeneity, it is unlikely that all of the existing connections can, or will, help the strategic initiative. This is just one example of the fallacy of assuming a cohesive team, especially when goals are discussed. Our study highlights the importance of integrating goal heterogeneity in studying strategic initiatives and ensuring that the variations arising from heterogeneous goals are represented in theoretical models.

One natural extension of our theoretical arguments relates to the literature's attention to contingency factors that impact the development of strategic initiatives. Arguably, two of the most important contingencies relate to the initiative's content and point of origin: the degree to which an initiative is exploratory (March, 1991) and whether the initiative originated in the core or the periphery of the organization, that is, whether it is induced or autonomous (Burgelman, 1983). The literature has focused on these factors, investigating the differences in initiative development and success (e.g., Burgelman, 1991; Lechner and Floyd, 2012; Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014; Canales, 2015; Kreutzer et al., 2016; Walter et al., 2016). That said, we argue that this model holds whether the initiative is exploratory or exploitative and whether it originated through an induced process or emerged as an autonomous initiative.

The level of exploration of a strategic initiative indicates the degree to which it explores new knowledge and capabilities. Exploratory initiatives tend to be marred by uncertainty, require more autonomy, and rely on political alliances for support (Maritan, 2001; Lavie et al., 2010; Lechner and Floyd, 2012), making them more likely to fail in implementation. However, we argue that the variables discussed in this study do not change their effects based on the level of exploration. Starting with decision comprehensiveness, the literature shows the positive impact of rational decision-making on outcomes regardless of the initiative content (Lechner and Floyd, 2012). Moreover, while decision comprehensiveness has long been discussed as being less helpful in dynamic environments (Fredrickson and Mitchell, 1984; Iaquinto and Fredrickson, 1997), recent research does not provide much support (Miller and McKee, 2021; Samba et al., 2021). At the same time, the literature points to the value of rational and analytical justification in mitigating uncertainties during initiative development (Klingebiel and De Meyer, 2013). Overall, the literature suggests that comprehensiveness is valuable for both initiative types.

While arguments can be made for the added utility of different types of control mechanisms under certain circumstances, the literature points to the fact that both output and behavior controls have advantages and disadvantages (Kreutzer et al., 2015, 2016). Outcome controls provide individuals with more freedom, which might be more helpful in undertaking exploratory initiatives, but output controls are harder to codify in contexts with significant uncertainty. Behavior controls are helpful in standardizing work, which could guide exploitative actions, yet they stifle creativity and motivation, which are instrumental for exploration. Therefore, under both initiative types, both controls can play a role.

Finally, arguments have been made regarding the utility of strategic consensus in various contexts. For example, a meta-analysis suggests that strategic consensus negatively impacts performance in dynamic environments (Kellermanns et al., 2011). This suggests that exploratory strategic initiatives that face more uncertainty might not benefit from strategic consensus. At the same time, both integrating new initiatives into corporate strategy and issue selling require actions that would legitimize the initiative within the context of the existing strategy (Dutton et al., 2001; Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014; Dörrenbächer and Gammelgaard, 2016). A lack of understanding of strategic priorities is unlikely to be beneficial when attempting to integrate exploratory initiatives into an organization.

It should also be noted that autonomous initiatives that emerge in the organization's periphery, that is, initiatives championed by employees who are not usually part of the group attending formal planning and strategy-building activities (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014), tend to be more exploratory in content (Burgelman, 1991; Regnér, 2003) and aimed at creating new knowledge as opposed to exploiting existing knowledge. Thus, with respect to initiatives that are autonomous versus induced, the arguments put forth earlier regarding exploratory (or exploitative) content would likely hold for initiatives that are autonomous (or induced).

The purpose of the above discussion is to illustrate that the three specific constructs that we have discussed – decision comprehensiveness, organizational controls, and strategic consensus – all have benefits to offer to initiatives whether they might be exploratory, exploitative, autonomous, or induced. Thus, we believe that our arguments must be taken into account irrespective of initiative content or origination.

This study has significant managerial implications. Strategic initiatives fail at a high rate, with some research suggesting rates as high as 70% (CGMA, 2016; Kreutzer et al., 2016). Simultaneously, strategic initiatives are at the heart of strategic management (Noda and Bower, 1996; Lovas and Ghoshal, 2000; Nag et al., 2007) and help organizations renew themselves. As evidenced earlier, this difficulty largely arises from the fact that strategic initiatives are developed in a political context in which competing goals and interests dominate decision-making. Our discussion highlights several crucial issues for managers who oversee, and participate in, strategic initiative development.

First, we discuss the utility of decision comprehensiveness and organizational controls in handling goal heterogeneity. Managers do have some discretion to utilize both as levers to ensure that heterogeneous goals do not interfere with team members' commitment to the task and dissuade them from reaching a consensus. A comprehensive decision-making process can be very helpful, as it allows the discussion of different starting positions in the analysis of the task at hand. Such a rational process is not only helpful for heterogeneous teams but for those teams where goals align; in such a case, comprehensiveness will ensure that the team charts their route carefully, avoiding groupthink (Janis, 1982). While certain control mechanisms might not be within the purview of initiative team leaders, they do have some discretion in implementing such mechanisms as well as in influencing control norms within the team itself (Walter et al., 2021). Careful usage of controls and comprehensiveness can alleviate the impact of goal heterogeneity, turning a cross-functional group of individuals into a team with a commitment to and a shared understanding of the initiative task.

Second, our discussion highlights the importance of strategic consensus as an outcome that can influence the development of initiatives. Having a common understanding of the priorities can help the team move the initiative even further than it otherwise would have, regardless of alignment with the organizational goals. While this outcome is not necessarily related to a specific initiative, it particularly highlights the importance of a broad approach for upper management in formulating and communicating organizational strategy and priorities.

Finally, these implications suggest that a degree of process and goal awareness among the team is required. The management of team processes requires team leaders and members to think, evaluate, and address their actions (Mathieu et al., 2017). If team members and/or leaders are not aware of goal differences, they will not be able to manage the team effectively. The literature argues that effective team leaders of strategic initiatives influence team processes, helping members develop plans, manage objectives, and solve conflicts (Jassawalla and Sashittal, 2000). Thus, recognition and awareness are the first steps in overcoming goal differences, regardless of the source. Moreover, some degree of autonomy can be helpful for teams and their supervisors to act on these levers and manage the processes effectively. A wholly restrictive context for managing strategic initiative teams will unlikely be helpful for organizations that pursue a broad portfolio of initiatives (McGrath, 2001; Cordery et al., 2010; Lechner and Kreutzer, 2010a).

Note that the final implication assumes that differences in goals are not the result of malicious intent and hidden agendas, which can be uncontrollable in strategic initiative settings and are typically the underlying cause of political behavior that harms initiatives as well as interpersonal relationships (Hitt et al., 1999; Kreutzer et al., 2015). Antagonists can improve initiative performance as devil's advocates (Markham, 2000), but this requires opposition in a way that reveals one's position regarding the initiative. Hidden agendas are likely to hinder communication and cooperation and create unresponsiveness toward team demands (e.g., Guth and MacMillan, 1986; Huy et al., 2014). Even under such conditions, we believe that the controls and comprehensiveness discussed here can help thwart and minimize such sabotage; yet, this forms a boundary condition for the theory presented here.

Our study had several limitations. First, our theory applies to initiatives that received an initial mandate. Actions undertaken before the initial mandate, such as issue selling for this purpose, create certain levels of goal alignment and populate some team roles. We consider neither such activity nor why individuals or departments are assigned to the initiative in the first place or how the specific level of goal heterogeneity is formed. Second, the control mechanisms we discussed mostly relate to formal controls. Literature lacks research on the interactions between different mechanisms such as formal, informal, and peer controls (Cardinal et al., 2017). A framework that captures all three might provide additional insights into how to manage goal heterogeneity in strategic initiative teams. Finally, other constructs of interest could play a role in addressing or impacting the effects of goal heterogeneity on initiative performance. For example, in line with informal controls, organizational factors that set the context, such as culture, conflict norms, and expectations from individual members, can impact the level of goal heterogeneity as well as team members' behaviors during teamwork. Team member personalities might affect the propensity to pursue their own heterogeneous goals. The attention that the initiative receives from the top management team might soften harsh stances regarding goals in the team. Overall, more research on the factors that affect goal heterogeneity is warranted.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature by investigating goal heterogeneity in strategic initiative teams. Strategic initiatives fail at a very high rate (Walter et al., 2016), and there is a growing body of literature that argues for the use of initiatives as the unit of analysis in strategy research as well as investigating factors that impact their success. This study answers these calls by incorporating goals and their impact into strategic initiative development from a multi-level perspective.

CRediT author statement

Erim Ergene: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Reviewing & Editing.
Steven Floyd: Conceptualization, Writing - Reviewing & Editing.
Seray Ergene: Conceptualization, Writing - Reviewing & Editing.

Data availability

No data was used for the research described in the article.

References

Alexiev, A., Volberda, H., Jansen, J., Van Den Bosch, F., 2020. Contextualizing senior executive advice seeking: the role of decision process comprehensiveness and empowerment climate. Organ. Stud. 41, 471–497. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840619830128.
Ancona, D.G., Caldwell, D.F., 1992. Demography and design: predictors of new product team performance. Organ. Sci. 3, 321–341.
Argote, L., Greve, H.R., 2007. A behavioral theory of the firm — 40 years and counting: introduction and impact. Organ. Sci. 18, 337–349. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1070.0280.
Ateş, N.Y., Tarakci, M., Porck, J.P., van Knippenberg, D., Groenen, P.J.F., 2020. The dark side of visionary leadership in strategy implementation: strategic alignment, strategic consensus, and commitment. J. Manag. 46, 637–665. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318811567.
Aubé, C., Rousseau, V., Brunelle, E., Marques, D., 2018. The relevance of being "on the same page" to succeed as a project team: a moderated mediation model. Motiv. Emot. 42, 804–815. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-018-9706-2.
Baer, M., Dirks, K.T., Nickerson, J.A., 2013. Microfoundations of strategic problem formulation. Strat. Manag. J. 34, 197–214.
Barney, J., 1991. Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. J. Manag. 17, 99–120.
Bidwell, M.J., 2012. Politics and firm boundaries: how organizational structure, group interests, and resources affect outsourcing. Organ. Sci. 23, 1622–1642. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1120.0772.
Bourgeois, L.J., 1985. Strategic goals, perceived uncertainty, and economic performance in volatile environments. Acad. Manag. J. 28, 548–573. https://doi.org/10.2307/256113.
Bourgeois, L.J., 1980. Performance and consensus. Strat. Manag. J. 1, 227–248.
Bowman, C., Ambrosini, V., 1997. Perceptions of strategic priorities, consensus and firm performance. J. Manag. Stud. 34, 241–258. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00050.
Bragaw, N.A., Misangyi, V.F., 2022. Disentangling strategic consensus: strategic consensus types, psychological bonds, and their effects on strategic climate. Acad. Manag. Rev. 47, 668–691. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2016.0228.
Burgelman, R.A., 1991. Intraorganizational ecology of strategy making and organizational adaptation: theory and field research. Organ. Sci. 2, 239–262.
Burgelman, R.A., 1983. A model of the interaction of strategic behavior, corporate context, and the concept of strategy. Acad. Manag. Rev. 8, 61–70. https://doi.org/10.2307/257168.
Burgelman, R.A., Grove, A.S., 2007. Let chaos reign, then rein in chaos - repeatedly: managing strategic dynamics for corporate longevity. Strat. Manag. J. 28, 965–979. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.625.
Canales, J.I., 2015. Sources of selection in strategy making. J. Manag. Stud. 52, 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12101.
Cardinal, L.B., 2001. Technological innovation in the pharmaceutical industry: the use of organizational control in managing research and development. Organ. Sci. 12, 19–36. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.12.1.19.10119.
Cardinal, L.B., Kreutzer, M., Miller, C.C., 2017. An aspirational view of organizational control research: Re-invigorating empirical work to better meet the challenges of 21st century organizations. Acad. Manag. Ann. 11, 559–592. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2014.0086.
Cardinal, L.B., Sitkin, S.B., Long, C.P., 2004. Balancing and rebalancing in the creation and evolution of organizational control. Organ. Sci. 15, 411–431. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1040.0084.
Carpenter, M.A., Li, M., Jiang, H., 2012. Social network research in organizational contexts: a systematic review of methodological issues and choices. J. Manag. 38, 1328–1361. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312440119.
CGMA, 2016. Joining the Dots: Decision Making for a New Era. Chartered Global Management Accountant.
Chen, G., Kanfer, R., DeShon, R.P., Mathieu, J.E., Kozlowski, S.W.J., 2009. The motivating potential of teams: test and extension of Chen and Kanfer's (2006) cross-level model of motivation in teams. Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process. 110, 45–55. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2009.06.006.
Colbert, A.E., Kristof-Brown, A.L., Bradley, B.H., Barrick, M.R., 2008. Ceo transformational leadership: the role of goal importance congruence in top management teams. Acad. Manag. J. 51, 81–96. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2008.30717744.
Cordery, J.L., Morrison, D., Wright, B.M., Wall, T.D., 2010. The impact of autonomy and task uncertainty on team performance: a longitudinal field study. J. Organ. Behav. 31, 240–258. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.657.
Cornelissen, J.P., Holt, R., Zundel, M., 2011. The role of analogy and metaphor in the framing and legitimization of strategic change. Organ. Stud. 32, 1701–1716. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840611425729.
Cyert, R.M., March, J.G., 1963. A Behavioral Theory of the Firm, second ed. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.
Davis, J.P., Eisenhardt, K.M., 2011. Rotating leadership and collaborative innovation: recombination processes in symbiotic relationships. Adm. Sci. Q. 56, 159–201.
De Clercq, D., Bouckenooghe, D., Raja, U., Matsyborska, G., 2013. Unpacking the goal congruence–organizational deviance relationship: the roles of work engagement and emotional intelligence. J. Bus. Ethics 124, 695–711. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1902-0.
De Clercq, D., Castañer, X., Belausteguigoitia, I., 2011. Entrepreneurial initiative selling within organizations: towards a more comprehensive motivational framework. J. Manag. Stud. 48, 1269–1290. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2010.00999.x.
De Dreu, C.K.W., Nauta, A., 2009. Self-interest and other-orientation in organizational behavior: implications for job performance, prosocial behavior, and personal initiative. J. Appl. Psychol. 94, 913–926. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014494.
de Wit, F.R.C., Greer, L.G., Jehn, K.A., 2012. The paradox of intragroup conflict: a meta-analysis. J. Appl. Psychol. 97, 360–390.
Dean, J.W., Sharfman, M.P., 1996. Does decision process matter? A study of strategic decision-making effectiveness. Acad. Manag. J. 39, 368–392. https://doi.org/10.2307/256784.

Desmidt, S., George, B., 2016. Do we see eye to eye? The relationship between internal communication and between-group strategic consensus: a case analysis. Manag. Commun. Q. 30, 84–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318915609406.

Dess, G.G., 1987. Consensus on strategy formulation and organizational performance: competitors in a fragmented industry. Strat. Manag. J. 8, 259–277.

Dooley, R.S., Fryxell, G.E., Judge, W.Q., 2000. Belaboring the not-so-obvious: consensus, commitment, and strategy implementation speed and success. J. Manag. 26, 1237–1257. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600609.

Dörrenbächer, C., Gammelgaard, J., 2016. Subsidiary initiative taking in multinational corporations: the relationship between power and issue selling. Organ. Stud. 37, 1249–1270. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840616634130.

Dutton, J.E., Ashford, S.J., O'Neill, R.M., Lawrence, K.A., 2001. Moves that matter: issue selling and organizational change. Acad. Manag. J. 44, 716–736. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069412.

Ensley, M.D., Pearson, A.W., 2005. An exploratory comparison of the behavioral dynamics of top management teams in family and nonfamily new ventures: cohesion, conflict, potency, and consensus. Entrepreneur.: Theory Practice 29, 267–284. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2005.00082.x.

Ethiraj, S.K., Ramasubbu, N., Krishnan, M.s., 2012. Does complexity deter customer-focus? Strat. Manag. J. 33, 137–161. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.947.

Floyd, S.W., Lane, P.J., 2000. Strategizing throughout the organization: managing role conflict in strategic renewal. Acad. Manag. Rev. 25, 154–177. https://doi.org/10.2307/259268.

Floyd, S.W., Wooldridge, B., 2000. Building Strategy from the Middle: Reconceptualizing Strategy Process. Sage, Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Floyd, S.W., Wooldridge, B., 1992. Middle management involvement in strategy and its association with strategic type: a research note. Strat. Manag. J. 13, 153–167. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250131012.

Forbes, D.P., 2007. Reconsidering the strategic implications of decision comprehensiveness. Acad. Manag. Rev. 32, 361–376. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2007.24349585.

Fredrickson, J.W., 1984. The comprehensiveness of strategic decision processes: extension, observations, future directions. Acad. Manag. J. 27, 445–466. https://doi.org/10.2307/256039.

Fredrickson, J.W., Mitchell, T.R., 1984. Strategic decision processes: comprehensiveness and performance in an industry with an unstable environment. Acad. Manag. J. 27, 399–423. https://doi.org/10.2307/255932.

Garrett Jr., R.P., Covin, J.G., 2015. Internal corporate venture operations independence and performance: a knowledge-based perspective. Entrepreneur.: Theory Practice 39, 763–790. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12059.

Gavetti, G., Greve, H.R., Levinthal, D.A., Ocasio, W., 2012. The behavioral theory of the firm: assessment and prospects. Acad. Manag. Ann. 6, 1–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2012.656841.

Guth, W.D., MacMillan, I.C., 1986. Strategy implementation versus middle management self-interest. Strat. Manag. J. 7, 313–327.

Hambrick, D.C., 1994. Top management groups: a conceptual integration and reconsideration of the "team" label. In: Staw, B.M., Cummings, L.L. (Eds.), Research in Organizational Behavior. JAI Press, Greenwich, CT, pp. 171–214.

Heavey, C., Simsek, Z., Roche, F., Kelly, A., 2009. Decision comprehensiveness and corporate entrepreneurship: the moderating role of managerial uncertainty preferences and environmental dynamism. J. Manag. Stud. 46, 1289–1314. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00858.x.

Hitt, M.A., Nixon, R.D., Hoskisson, R.F., Kochhar, R., 1999. Corporate entrepreneurship and cross-functional fertilization: activation, process and disintegration of a new product design team. Entrepreneur.: Theory Practice 23, 145–167.

Humphrey, S.E., Aime, F., 2014. Team microdynamics: toward an organizing approach to teamwork. Acad. Manag. Ann. 8, 443–503. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2014.904140.

Huy, Q.N., 2002. Emotional balancing of organizational continuity and radical change: the contribution of middle managers. Adm. Sci. Q. 47, 31–69.

Huy, Q.N., Corley, K.G., Kraatz, M.S., 2014. From support to mutiny: shifting legitimacy judgments and emotional reactions impacting the implementation of radical change. Acad. Manag. J. 57, 1650–1680. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0074.

Iaquinto, A.L., Fredrickson, J.W., 1997. Top management team agreement about the strategic decision process: a test of some of its determinants and consequences. Strat. Manag. J. 18, 63–75. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266, 199701)18:1<63::AID-SMJ835>3.0.CO;2-N.

Janis, I.L., 1982. Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

Jarzabkowski, P., Balogun, J., 2009. The practice and process of delivering integration through strategic planning. J. Manag. Stud. 46, 1255–1288. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00853.x.

Jassawalla, A.R., Sashittal, H.C., 2000. Strategies of effective new product team leaders. Calif. Manag. Rev. 42, 34–51.

Kaplan, S., 2008. Framing contests: strategy making under uncertainty. Organ. Sci. 19, 729–752. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1070.0340.

Keller, R.T., 2001. Cross-functional project groups in research and new product development: diversity, communications, job stress, and outcomes. Acad. Manag. J. 44, 547–555. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069369.

Kellermanns, F.W., Walter, J., Floyd, S.W., Lechner, C., Shaw, J.C., 2011. To agree or not to agree? A meta-analytical review of strategic consensus and organizational performance. J. Bus. Res. 64, 126–133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2010.02.004.

Kellermanns, F.W., Walter, J., Lechner, C., Floyd, S.W., 2005. The lack of consensus about strategic consensus: advancing theory and research. J. Manag. 31, 719–737. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279114.

Kijkuit, B., van den Ende, J., 2010. With a little help from our colleagues: a longitudinal study of social networks for innovation. Organ. Stud. 31, 451–479. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840609357398.

Kirkman, B.L., Rosen, B., 1999. Beyond self-management: antecedents and consequences of team empowerment. Acad. Manag. J. 42, 58–74. https://doi.org/10.5465/256874.

Klein, H.J., Molloy, J.C., Brinsfield, C.T., 2012. Reconceptualizing workplace commitment to redress a stretched construct: Revisiting assumptions and removing confounds. Acad. Manage. Rev. 37, 130–151. https://doi.org/10.5465/arma.2010.0018.

Klingebiel, R., De Meyer, A., 2013. Becoming aware of the unknown: decision making during the implementation of a strategic initiative. Organ. Sci. 24, 133–153. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1110.0726.

Knight, D., Pearce, C.L., Smith, K.G., Olian, J.D., Sims, H.P., Smith, K.A., Flood, P., 1999. Top management team diversity, group process, and strategic consensus. Strat. Manag. J. 20, 445–465.

Kotlar, J., De Massis, A., Wright, M., Frattini, F., 2018. Organizational goals: antecedents, formation processes and implications for firm behavior and performance. Int. J. Manag. Rev. 20 https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12170. S3–S18.

Kozlowski, S.W.J., Bell, B.S., 2013. Work groups and teams in organizations: review update. In: Schmitt, N.W., Highhouse, S. (Eds.), Handbook of Psychology:, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, vol. 12 Wiley, Hoboken, N.J, pp. 412–469.

Kreutzer, M., Cardinal, L.B., Walter, J., Lechner, C., 2016. Formal and informal control as complement or substitute? The role of the task environment. Strat. Sci. 1, 235–255. https://doi.org/10.1287/stsc.2016.0019.

Kreutzer, M., Walter, J., Cardinal, L.B., 2015. Organizational control as antidote to politics in the pursuit of strategic initiatives. Strat. Manag. J. 36, 1317–1337. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2306.

Kristof-Brown, A.L., Stevens, C.K., 2001. Goal congruence in the project teams: does the fit between members' personal mastery and performance goals matter? J. Appl. Psychol. 86, 1083–1095.

Lavie, D., Stettner, U., Tushman, M.L., 2010. Exploration and exploitation within and across organizations. Acad. Manag. Ann. 4, 109–155. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416521003691287.

Lechner, C., Floyd, S.W., 2012. Group influence activities and the performance of strategic initiatives. Strat. Manag. J. 33, 478–495. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.959.

Lechner, C., Frankenberger, K., Floyd, S., 2010. Task contingencies in the curvilinear relationships between intergroup networks and initiative performance. Acad. Manag. J. 53, 865–889.

Lechner, C., Kreutzer, M., 2010a. Strategic initiatives: past, present and future. In: Mazzola, P., Kellermanns, F.W. (Eds.), Handbook of Research on Strategy Process. Edward Elgar, Northampton, MA.

Lechner, C., Kreutzer, M., 2010b. Coordinating growth initiatives in multi-unit firms. Long. Range Plan. 43, 6–32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2009.10.002.
Li, H., Bingham, J.B., Umphress, E.E., 2007. Fairness from the top: perceived procedural justice and collaborative problem solving in new product development. Organ. Sci. 18, 200–216. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1060.0231.
Linder, S., Foss, N.J., 2018. Microfoundations of organizational goals: a review and new directions for future research. Int. J. Manag. Rev. 20, S39. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12154. –S62.
Lovas, B., Ghoshal, S., 2000. Strategy as guided evolution. Strat. Manag. J. 21, 875–896.
Lovelace, K., Shapiro, D.L., Weingart, L.R., 2001. Maximizing cross-functional new product teams' innovativeness and constraint adherence: a conflict communications perspective. Acad. Manag. J. 44, 779–793.
March, J.G., 1991. Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. Organ. Sci. 2, 71–87. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2.1.71.
Maritan, C.A., 2001. Capital investment as investing in organizational capabilities: an empirically grounded process model. Acad. Manag. J. 44, 513–531. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069367.
Markham, S., 2000. Corporate championing and antagonism as forms of political behavior: an R&D perspective. Organ. Sci. 11, 429–447. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.11.4.429.14599.
Mathieu, J.E., Hollenbeck, J.R., van Knippenberg, D., Ilgen, D.R., 2017. A century of work teams in the Journal of Applied Psychology. Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Applied Psychology Centennial Special Issue 102, 452–467. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000128.
McGrath, R.G., 2001. Exploratory learning, innovative capacity, and managerial oversight. Acad. Manag. J. 44, 118–131. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069340.
Miller, C.C., McKee, R.A., 2021. Decision comprehensiveness and the outcomes of firms: reinterpreting and extending a recent meta-analysis. Strat. Organ. 19, 441–448. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020927483.
Mirabeau, L., Maguire, S., 2014. From autonomous strategic behavior to emergent strategy. Strat. Manag. J. 35, 1202–1229. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2149.
Mohammed, S., Ferzandi, L., Hamilton, K., 2010. Metaphor no more: a 15-year review of the team mental model construct. J. Manag. 36, 876–910. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309356804.
Nag, R., Hambrick, D.C., Chen, M.-J., 2007. What is strategic management, really? Inductive derivation of a consensus definition of the field. Strat. Manag. J. 28, 935–955. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.615.
Nauta, A., De Dreu, C.K.W., van der Vaart, T., 2002. Social value orientation, organizational goal concerns and interdepartmental problem-solving behavior. J. Organ. Behav. 23, 199–213. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.136.
Nauta, A., Sanders, K., 2001. Causes and consequences of perceived goal differences between departments within manufacturing organizations. J. Occup. Organ. Psychol. 74, 321–342. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317901167389.
Noda, T., Bower, J.L., 1996. Strategy making as iterated processes of resource allocation. Strat. Manag. J. 17, 159–192. https://doi.org/10.2307/2486909.
Ouchi, W.G., 1980. Markets, bureaucracies, and clans. Adm. Sci. Q. 25, 129–141. https://doi.org/10.2307/2392231.
Pappas, J.M., Wooldridge, B., 2007. Middle managers' divergent strategic activity: an investigation of multiple measures of network centrality. J. Manag. Stud. 44, 323–341. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00681.x.
Porck, J.P., van Knippenberg, D., 2022. An integrative model of the role of structural, behavioural, and cognitive coordination in intergroup effectiveness: how middle managers play a role. J. Manag. Stud. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12841.
Porck, J.P., van Knippenberg, D., Tarakci, M., Ateş, N.Y., Groenen, P.J.F., de Haas, M., 2020. Do group and organizational identification help or hurt intergroup strategic consensus? J. Manag. 46, 234–260. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318788434.
Priem, R.L., 1990. Top management team group factors, consensus, and firm performance. Strat. Manag. J. 11, 469–478. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250110605.
Priem, R.L., Harrison, D.A., Muir, N.K., 1995. Structured conflict and consensus outcomes in group decision making. J. Manag. 21, 691–710. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639502100406.
Ramos-Garza, C., 2009. TMT strategic consensus in Mexican companies. J. Bus. Res., Special Issue on BALAS (Business Association for Latin American Studies) 62, 854–860. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.10.003.
Rapert, M.I., Lynch, D., Sutter, T., 1996. Enhancing functional and organizational performance via strategic consensus and commitment. J. Strat. Market. 4, 193. https://doi.org/10.1080/09652549600000004.
Raveendran, M., Silvestri, L., Gulati, R., 2020. The role of interdependence in the microfoundations of organization design: task, goal, and knowledge interdependence. Acad. Manag. Ann. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2018.0015.
Regnér, P., 2003. Strategy creation in the periphery: inductive versus deductive strategy making. J. Manag. Stud. 40, 57–82. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.t01-1-00004.
Roberto, M.A., 2004. Strategic decision-making processes beyond the efficiency-consensus trade-off. Group Organ. Manag. 29, 625–658. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601103257961.
Samba, C., Tabesh, P., Thanos, I.C., Papadakis, V.M., 2021. Method in the madness? A meta-analysis on the strategic implications of decision comprehensiveness. Strat. Organ. 19, 414–440. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020904973.
Shepherd, N.G., Hodgkinson, G.P., Mooi, E.A., Elbanna, S., Rudd, J.M., 2020. Political behavior does not (always) undermine strategic decision making: theory and evidence. Long. Range Plan. 53, 101943 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2019.101943.
Simon, H.A., 1964. On the concept of organizational goal. Adm. Sci. Q. 9, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.2307/2391519.
Simons, R., 1994. How new top managers use control systems as levers of strategic renewal. Strat. Manag. J. 15, 169–189.
Simons, R., 1991. Strategic orientation and top management attention to control systems. Strat. Manag. J. 12, 49–62. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250120105.
Simsek, Z., Veiga, J.F., Lubatkin, M.H., Dino, R.N., 2005. Modeling the multilevel determinants of top management team behavioral integration. Acad. Manag. J. 48, 69–84. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2005.15993139.
St John, C.H., Rue, L.W., 1991. Co-ordinating mechanisms, consensus between marketing and manufacturing groups, and marketplace performance. Strat. Manag. J. 12, 549–555. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250120707.
Tarakci, M., Ateş, N.Y., Porck, J.P., van Knippenberg, D., Groenen, P.J.F., de Haas, M., 2014. Strategic consensus mapping: a new method for testing and visualizing strategic consensus within and between teams. Strat. Manag. J. 35, 1053–1069. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2151.
Tekleab, A.G., Karaca, A., Quigley, N.R., Tsang, E.W.K., 2016. Re-examining the functional diversity–performance relationship: the roles of behavioral integration, team cohesion, and team learning. J. Bus. Res. 69, 3500–3507. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.01.036.
Thomas, L., Ambrosini, V., 2015. Materializing strategy: the role of comprehensiveness and management controls in strategy formation in volatile environments. Br. J. Manag. 26, S105. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12075. –S124.
Voyer, J.J., 1994. Coercive organizational politics and organizational outcomes: an interpretive study. Organ. Sci. 5, 72–85. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.5.1.72.
Walter, J., Kellermanns, F.W., Floyd, S.W., Veiga, J.F., Matherne, C., 2013. Strategic alignment: a missing link in the relationship between strategic consensus and organizational performance. Strat. Organ. 11, 304–328.
Walter, J., Kreutzer, M., Kreutzer, K., 2021. Setting the tone for the team: a multi-level analysis of managerial control, peer control, and their consequences for job satisfaction and team performance. J. Manag. Stud. 58, 849–878. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12622.
Walter, J., Lechner, C., Kellermanns, F.W., 2016. Learning activities, exploration, and the performance of strategic initiatives. J. Manag. 42, 769–802.
Weber, K., Waeger, D., 2017. Organizations as polities: an open systems perspective. Acad. Manag. Ann. 11, 886–918. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2015.0152.
West Jr., C.T., Schwenk, C.R., 1996. Top management team strategic consensus, demographic homogeneity and firm performance: a report of resounding nonfindings. Strat. Manag. J. 17, 571–576. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199607)17:7<571::AID-SMJ817>3.0.CO;2-C.
Wooldridge, B., Floyd, S.W., 1990. The strategy process, middle management involvement, and organizational performance. Strat. Manag. J. 11, 231–241.
Wooldridge, B., Floyd, S.W., 1989. Strategic process effects on consensus. Strat. Manag. J. 10, 295–302.
Yan, T., Dooley, K.J., 2013. Communication intensity, goal congruence, and uncertainty in buyer–supplier new product development. J. Oper. Manag. 31, 523–542. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2013.10.001.

Erim Ergene is an Assistant Professor of Management at the College of Business, Bryant University. He received his PhD from the Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts – Amherst. His research lies at the intersection of behavioral strategy and strategy process, with a developing focus on sustainability. His past work appeared in *Human Relations* and *Service Business.* [Email: eergene@bryant.edu]

Steven W Floyd was the Emeritus Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts—Amherst. His research focused on the strategy development process, and much of it took a middle management perspective on how strategy forms. Professor Floyd's work has been published in many of the leading journals of the field and he was a former General Editor of the Journal of Management Studies and Associate Editor of the Strategic Management Journal. Professor Floyd passed away in October 2022 while this paper was under review. He was an amazing mentor and champion of his students. The authors of this paper will always remember Professor Floyd affectionately; he truly made a difference in our lives.

Seray Ergene is an Assistant Professor of Management in the College of Business at the University of Rhode Island. She received her PhD from the Isenberg School of Management, University of Massachusetts – Amherst. She studies sustainability from various angles, including strategy process and decision-making. Her previous work was published in *Organization Studies* and *Gender, Work, & Organization*. [Email: serayergene@uri.edu]