

**EXTENDED ABSTRACT OF**

**ADAPTIVE STRUCTURATION OF COMMUNICATION AND**

**RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN GLOBAL VIRTUAL TEAMS**

Majid Aleem  
Turku School of Economics  
University of Turku  
Finland

Relationships among team members in virtual environments have influenced the performance of a team to a very large extent. Previous attempts to study this phenomenon have made it possible for us to understand different factors which influence relationship development. However, how does the process of relationship development unfolds over the life of a virtual team is still unknown to a large extent.

This study focuses on understanding the process through which relationships develop over time around communication. It focuses on the Adaptive structuration by analyzing the structural and human agency elements of communication. This study follows a process approach while using group development theories and generative mechanisms as method tools to perform analysis of qualitative data collected over two years.

The study concludes that while performing different tasks, central to team members' performance is communication. The structures and human elements around communication play a significant role in relationship development. It provides an overview of the multiple processes based on group development models which influence relationship development. Understanding these processes can help managers and team leaders to better manage their teams for optimal performance. Relationship development takes different trajectories during the life span of these teams. Relationships tend to develop positively and get reinforced over time, in the second case, relationships develop negatively and tend to get reinforced over time, in the third case relationships initially develop positively however in later stage take on a negative trajectory. In the last case, initially, relationships develop negatively but in, later on, take a positive trajectory.

Keywords: Global Virtual Teams, Relationship Development, Adaptive Structuration,