



The Impact of Innovation-oriented Organizational Climate on Employee's Creative Behavior: A Case Study in Poland

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Abstract

Innovation serves as a crucial strategy for enterprises navigating complex and dynamic environments. Despite the acknowledged significance of this, the influence of an organization's innovation environment on employees' innovative behavior remains underexplored. In addition, the existing scholarly works have frequently overlooked to examine the specific dimensions of organizational innovation climate and their distinct effects on employee innovation. This study aims to address these gaps by investigating and examining the impact of an innovation-oriented organizational climate on employees' creative behavior. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 32 companies that operate in various fields in Poland. The research findings clearly indicate that three key dimensions (self-directed workability, team cooperation, and organizational incentives) of an innovation-focused organizational climate positively and significantly affect employee innovation behavior. To effectively enhance organizational performance and achieve superior outcomes, business leaders are advised to prioritize creating a supportive and innovation-driven work climate, while concurrently considering the motivational perspectives of the employees.

Keywords: *Innovation-supportive Workplace Climate, Self-directed Workability, Teamwork Cooperation, Organizational Incentives, Creative Behavior.*

Introduction

Innovation is a critical factor in driving economic growth, contributing significantly to organizational sustainability and market competitiveness. As the primary source of innovation and development, businesses depend on their capacity to adapt and flourish in dynamic environments. The capacity to innovate enables organizations, teams and individuals to deal with complicated and ever-changing market conditions effectively, whether this involves the creation of new products, the enhancement of services or the advancement of technologies (Liu et al., 2016).

The foundation of organizational innovation is the workforce, as they embody the knowledge, skills and creativity that drive sustainable competitive advantage. Employees' capacity for innovation greatly affects a business's productivity and efficiency, helping organizations stay competitive in a dynamic and high-risk market environment. In an environment of rapidly evolving technology and global competition, the innovative potential of employees is critical. Their contribution is important to improving production processes, operational efficiency and the capacity of organizations to succeed in the future challenges (Saraf et al., 2021).

Today's era is characterized by the prevalence of innovation-driven development strategies, with organizations increasingly focusing on fostering creativity in all aspects of their operations. To achieve differentiation and ensure long-term growth, organizations prioritize development in products, services and technol-

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ogies (Daikoku et al., 2021). Consequently, a major challenge for business managers is identifying effective strategies to inspire and motivate employees to engage in continuous innovation. To unlock this potential, it is essential to cultivate a supportive organizational climate that fosters creativity (Bledow et al., 2013).

Although the link between an organization's innovation climate and employees' innovative behaviors has been discussed to a certain extent, there is limited comprehensive research that addresses the internal interaction mechanisms of these two factors. This study place emphasis on three internal interaction mechanisms, namely self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation and organizational incentives.

Literature Review

The connection between the innovation environment and the creative actions of its employees has been a growing area of interest among domestic and international scholars.

Proposed by Deci and Ryan in 1985, self-determination theory serves as a key framework for exploring the influence of the environment on behavior. This theory elaborates that an individual's actions are largely determined by their motivation, which is shaped by external environment. Motivation can either be intrinsic, stemming from sense of achievement and interest, or extrinsic, influenced by material incentives or stress. In an organizational context, the innovation climate, characterized by factors such as support for creativity, availability of resources, and willingness to take risks, can either enhance or reduce employees' motivation to engage in innovative actions (Aldabbas et al., 2021). When an organization's climate supports autonomy, competence and relatedness, it fosters intrinsic motivation, it will improve the intrinsic motivation, ultimately encouraging greater creativity.

The individual-organization matching theory suggests that individual's attitudes and behaviors are the result of the interaction between personal traits and environmental conditions (Garivani et al., 2016). In this framework, the innovation-oriented organizational environment acts as a specific situational factor that interacts with individual traits, such as personality, skills, and goals. A supportive and innovative organizational climate aligns with employees' needs and aspirations, creating conditions that enable creative behavior (Chaubey et al., 2021). Conversely, a rigid or unsupportive climate may suppress an employee's ability or willingness to innovate, regardless of their individual potential.

The link between organizations and employee innovation is profound. This underlines the need for a thorough comprehension of how the organization's overall environment affects employees' creative actions. Many research emphasizes the importance of integrating organizational and individual factors to develop a comprehensive model of innovation behavior. For example, Xie and Wu (2013) argue that examining innovation behavior requires considering both the organizational innovation atmosphere and personal attributes simultaneously. This dual perspective helps explain how external environmental factors, such as leadership support or team dynamics, interact with individual factors like intrinsic motivation, creative self-confidence, and openness to new experiences.

Furthermore, some researchers highlight that an innovation-oriented climate acts as a mechanism for creativity by shaping employees' work motivations (Anderson et al., 2014). From this perspective, the creativity-focused workplace climate is not merely an external factor but a system that shapes and guides employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. For instance, an environment that acknowledges and rewards creative efforts, grants autonomy, and ensures access to necessary resources is likely to enhance employees' willingness to explore and undertake innovative tasks. In contrast, a restrictive or excessively bureaucratic climate can undermine motivation, leading to a decline in innovative performance (Chen & Li, 2010).

Research Foundation

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the impact of an innovation-oriented organizational climate on employees' creative behavior. This study seeks to enhance employee management practices to foster in-

novation and address the evolving challenges of the contemporary business environment. Ultimately, this research aims to cultivate more creative talent to meet the dynamic needs of the industrial sector.

Research Questions

What are the influences of an innovation-oriented organizational climate on employees' creative behavior? This is the primary research question. To address this overarching inquiry, it is further broken down into three key sub-questions:

- 1- How does self-directed workability influence employees' creative behavior?
- 2- How does team cooperation influence employees' creative behavior?
- 3- How do organizational incentives influence employees' creative behavior?

Research Principles

This study complies with research principles and guidance such as following the research ethics and ensuring the quality of data collection, which is developed and discussed in "Research Methodology".

Research Methodology

Data Collection

This study primarily utilized structured questionnaires to collect data. The data collection process was conducted over a five-month period, from March to July 2024. To ensure a diverse sample, the researcher collaborated with human resource managers from 32 companies located in three major cities in Poland: Warsaw, Kraków, and Łódź. These cities were selected due to their economic significance and representation of different industrial sectors. The background of these 32 Polish companies is illustrated in Table 1.

This table describes the distribution of surveyed companies across various manufacturing sectors: food (34.38%), petrochemicals (21.87%), garment (15.63%), paper products (12.50%), plastic (9.37%) and cement (6.25%). The majority of these businesses employed between 21-50 employees (56.25%). Most companies were established for 6-10 years (43.75%), followed by those established for 3-5 years (34.38%). In terms of annual turnover, 37.50% of the companies reported revenues in the range of 6-10 million PLN.

The human resource managers of the participating enterprises assisted in the distribution of the questionnaires. These were disseminated to employees through the managers, ensuring coverage across diverse departments and roles. This method enabled the survey to gather comprehensive perspective on how the organizational innovation climate affects creative behavior in different organizational contexts.

This study distributed 96 questionnaires and received 80 in return, yielding a response rate of 83.3%. Following the data collection stage, the responses were screened for completeness and validity. In the end, only 54 questionnaires

Table 1: The Background of Research Sample

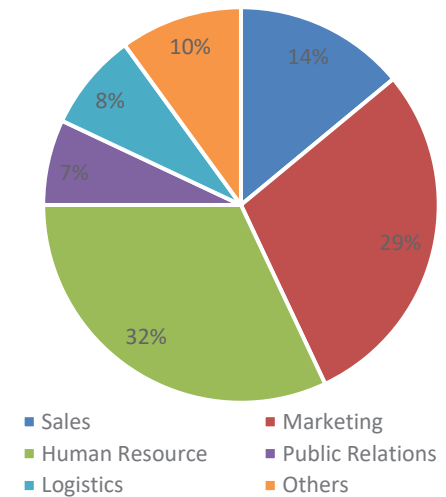
Characteristics	Number of enterprisers	Percentage (%)
Manufacturing Sectors		
Food manufacturing	11	34.38%
Garment industry	5	15.63%
Plastic products	3	9.37%
Cement industry	2	6.25%
Petrochemicals products	7	21.87%
Paper making and paper products	4	12.50%
Total	32	100.00%
Number of Full-time Employees		
<20	3	9.37%
21-50	18	56.25%
51-100	6	18.75%
>100	5	15.63%
Total	32	100.00%
Founding Years		
>10	3	9.37%
6-10	14	43.75%
3-5	11	34.38%
<3	4	12.50%
Total	32	100.00%
Annual Turnover		
Less than 1 million PLN	1	3.13%
1-5 million PLN	3	9.37%
6-10 million PLN	12	37.50%
More than 10 million PLN	4	12.50%
Not willing to disclose	12	37.50%
Total	32	100.00%

Source: Summarize from 32 Polish Companies

were found to be valid. This represented an effective response rate of 67.5%, indicating a relatively high level of engagement from the participants and providing a reliable data set for analysis.

Descriptive statistics of the research sample revealed that the majority of questionnaire respondents were from the human resource department, marketing department, and sales department (as shown in Chart 1 below). Moreover, the sample encompassed employees with diverse job roles, including general directors, managers, vice-managers, assistants, and ordinary staff. This is beneficial for capturing variations in how the innovation climate within an organization affects employee actions.

By focusing on different employees from multiple organizations, this study intended to ensure the generalizability of the findings within the context of Poland's corporate environment.



Source: Summarize from 32 Polish Companies

Chart 1: The Working Sectors of Research Sample

Variable Measurement

This study emphasizes two primary variables: the organizational innovation climate and employee innovation behaviors. The organizational innovation climate is analyzed through three dimensions: self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation, and organizational incentives.

1- Self-directed Workability

Self-directed workability represents the degree of autonomy that employees experience within their work environment. A workplace characterized by self-directed workability is free and harmonious, allowing employees to independently set their goals and schedules without undue interference (Wallace et al., 2016). It underlines autonomy and independent task execution.

Three items were used to measure self-directed workability.

- "I can decide how to implement the work process."
- "I have the space to work independently."
- "I can set my own work schedule."

In this research, the Cronbach's α value for self-directed workability is reported as 0.814, indicating good internal consistency.

2- Teamwork Cooperation

The dimension of teamwork cooperation highlights the collaborative dynamics among team members. It suggests that team members share common goals and engage in frequent communication and mutual support to address problems effectively (Amabile et al., 1996). It focuses on interaction, coordination, and emotional support within the team.

Teamwork cooperation is evaluated using three items:

- "Colleagues often communicate and discuss work issues".
- "Colleagues will take the initiative to assist me in completing my work".
- "I can feel the support and concern of my colleagues".

In this research, the Cronbach's α value for teamwork cooperation is 0.793, demonstrating a reliable measurement scale.

3- **Organizational Incentives**

Organizational incentives refer to the organization's commitment to cultivating creativity among employees through the provision of resources, support, and recognition (Zhou & Hoever, 2014). It includes technical, informational, and equipment support and places emphasis on rewards for creative efforts.

Organizational incentives were assessed with three items.

- "The company's reward system makes employees full of innovative enthusiasm".
- "The company encourages employees to come up with creative ideas".
- "The company's reward system effectively promotes work innovation".

In this research, Cronbach's α value for organizational incentives is 0.796, showing satisfactory internal reliability.

4- **Control Variables**

When selecting control variables, research has demonstrated that individual variables of employees will affect their work behavior and attitude. Therefore, this study takes gender, age, marriage status and education level as control variables. Additionally, the type of company was also considered as a control variable, considering the cross-level analysis and the diverse types of companies represented in the sample.

5- **Reliability of Variable Measurement**

The internal consistency for each dimension of the organizational innovation climate is acceptable, as indicated by their Cronbach's α values (ranging from 0.793 to 0.814). This ensures the reliability of the measurement instruments adopted in this research. The inclusion of control variables strengthens the study's design by mitigating potential biases in the analysis.

Research Ethics

Research ethics encompasses a comprehensive set of moral principles governing research behaviors and actions to safeguard the rights and welfare of participants. In this study, ethical guidelines were rigorously adhered to, ensuring no ethical issues arose during the investigation. For instance, a detailed explanation of research objectives and procedures was provided to prevent misunderstandings or misinterpretations and to establish trust with participants. Additionally, measures were taken to protect participants from any potential physical, emotional harm, danger, or discomfort associated with the research process. Furthermore, the confidentiality and privacy of participants' personal information were strictly maintained throughout the research.

Limitations of Research Methodology

Some evident limitations of research methodology exist. Firstly, one limitation of using secondary data is the difficulty in accessing critical and confidential information. This study considers only three dimensions of the organizational innovation climate, which makes it challenging to cover all relevant aspects. Additionally, it is impractical for this research to encompass all pertinent academic studies.

Moreover, due to time and resource constraints, this study focuses solely on 32 enterprises from one country (Poland). This limited sample size and geographical scope may restrict the generalizability of the findings and impact the robustness of the research results. Therefore, future research should aim to broaden the sample by collecting more empirical data from companies in various regions.

Research Results and Discussions

This study used SPSS to analyze the collected data, integrating the three dimensions of self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation, and organizational incentives into organizational-level variables.

Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses were performed to examine the impacts of these dimensions on employee innovation behavior. The research findings are presented and summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sex	Age	Marriage	Education	Company Type	Self-directed Workability	Teamwork	Organizational Incentives
Sex	1.520	0.500								
Age	1.510	0.711	0.019							
Marriage	1.670	0.470	-0.095	-0.646						
Education	2.950	0.708	-0.024	-0.048	0.072					
Company Type	1.700	0.572	-0.069	0.018	0.121	0.025				
Self-directed Workability	3.535	0.774	0.081	0.001	-0.051	0.073	0.019			
Teamwork Cooperation	3.703	0.713	0.104	-0.119	0.054	0.143	0.021	0.655		
Organizational Incentives	3.685	0.685	0.117	-0.108	0.032	0.078	-0.010	0.729	0.773	
Innovative Behavior of Employee	3.761	0.378	0.067	-0.039	-0.035	-0.046	0.113	0.381	0.351	0.360

Source: Summarize from 32 Polish Companies

As shown in Table 2, the correlation coefficients indicate that self-directed workability (0.381), teamwork cooperation (0.351), and organizational incentives (0.360) are significantly and positively correlated with employee innovation behavior at the 0.001 significance level.

The correlation coefficient between self-directed workability and employee innovation behavior is 0.381. This indicates that a higher degree of autonomy in the workplace, where employees can independently set goals and schedules, is associated with a significant increase in their innovative behaviors. Fewer constraints in the environment help individuals break cognitive inertia and develop new cognitive paradigms. As a result, freedom is an important condition for inspiring creativity. When employees perceive control or limitations in their work, their intrinsic motivation is reduced, hindering the stimulation of creativity.

The correlation coefficient between teamwork cooperation and employee innovation behavior is 0.351. This result underscores the importance of collaborative dynamics, where frequent communication, mutual support, and shared goals among team members facilitate the generation of creative solutions and enhance innovative outcomes. Cooperation and communication help staff better understand work problems and get more useful information. The better the teamwork atmosphere perceived by employees; the more likely innovation behavior made by employees.

The correlation coefficient between organizational incentives and employee innovation behavior is 0.360. This suggests that organizational practices that recognize and reward creative efforts, while providing the necessary resources and support, significantly contribute to employees' willingness to engage in innovative tasks. When employees feel that the organization provides them with reward and respect, they are more likely to do innovative work.

Implications for Practice

From a practical view, the findings of this research suggest several strategies for promoting innovation within organizations as follows.

Enhancing Self-directed Workability

Organizations ought to empower employees by offering them more autonomy in their work processes. This can be accomplished by reducing micromanagement, promoting flexible working hours, and enabling employees to set their own goals and schedules. In this way, organizations can cultivate a more innovative workforce in which employees feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for their work.

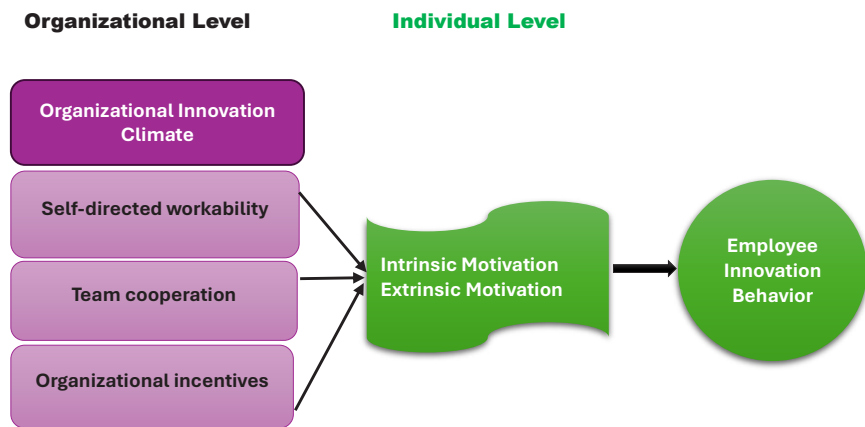
Promoting Teamwork Cooperation

Companies should invest in fostering a collaborative work culture. This may involve encouraging open communication, establishing cross-functional teams, and providing opportunities for employees to share ideas and collaborate on problem-solving. Teamwork can enhance innovation by allowing employees to combine their knowledge and expertise.

Implementing Effective Organizational Incentives

It is essential for organizations to design reward systems that specifically recognize and incentivize creativity. Such incentives may include monetary rewards, recognition programs, opportunities for career advancement, and providing employees with resources to experiment with new ideas. Not only do these incentives encourage innovative behavior, but they also signal the organization's dedication to cultivating a culture of innovation.

By emphasizing the three dimensions of self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation, and organizational incentives, organizations can motivate employees both intrinsically and extrinsically. Moreover, this approach enables the creation of a supportive environment conducive to innovation, ultimately enhancing organizational performance and competitive advantage (see Figure 1).



Source: Developed by the Author

Figure 1: Model of Organizational Innovation Climate and Employees' Innovative Behaviors

Conclusion

This research is based on self-determination theory and individual organization matching theory, starting from the localized management scenarios in Poland, focusing on three dimensions (self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation, and organizational incentives) respectively affect employee innovation behavior.

The study results show that self-directed workability, teamwork cooperation, and organizational incentives exert a strong positive influence on employees' innovative behaviors. The innovative behaviors shown by employees will inevitably change due to different organizational environments. The stronger the organizational innovation climate, including factors like teamwork and organizational incentives, the higher employees' willingness to innovate, and the more innovative behaviors they are likely to exhibit. Only when leaders establish a supportive innovation climate, can they effectively stimulate employees' creative motivation.

Future research could extend these findings by exploring other organizational and individual factors that influence innovation, such as leadership styles, organizational culture, and employee personality, to provide a deeper insight into the dynamics of innovation across various contexts.

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