

A Systematic Literature Review on the Mediation Effect of Support for Innovation at Workplace to the Impact of Power Distance and Employee Innovative Behavior

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INTRODUCTION

Research on employee innovative behaviour identifies itself as the central point of organizational success in the long run. Since the foundation of innovative behaviour is ideas, the study of identifying what really motivates innovative behaviour is critical in workplace. Based on the research findings on antecedents of innovative behaviour, it is evident that this has been recognized as a micro level outcome of individuals which have resulted on various dynamics. Moreover, employees are unable to implement innovative ideas on their own in the organizational context without an adequate support receiving from the management, organization and culture (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Hunter, et al., 2007). Yet, innovative behaviour is less visible on present contexts of contemporary organizations due to power distance (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). The research on power distance in different cultural backgrounds shows that power relationships formed among individuals, groups and organizations are a source for various positive and negative individual and organizational outcomes (Tripathi and Bharadwaja, 2018; Rao and Pearce, 2016). Therefore, understanding of power distance on innovative behavior is especially important in organizational research as innovations, support for innovations and innovative behaviour are crucial for a contemporary organization. Though, relatively a few studies have tested how and why power distance is affecting on employee innovative behavior in an organization; their focus was mainly based on broad outcomes which in return call for more research on micro level outcomes of a workplace. Hence, this study mainly focuses on a Systematic Review of Literature on employee innovative behavior at a workplace which is a micro level outcome of power distance and support for innovations.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Research objectives are presented in the next section. Then, theory section briefly reviews the literature pertaining to power distance, employee

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innovative behaviour and support for innovations. Later, research method is outlined. Results section presents the model developed from the Systematic Literature Review. Finally, a discussion of the research findings and implications for the management and theory are presented.

OBJECTIVES

With this background, this study mainly focuses to develop a model that shows the impact of power distance and employee innovative behaviour with the mediating effect of support for innovations to the direct association. However, this paper mainly focuses to systematically review the literature on power distance, support for innovations and employee innovative behaviour and later, develop a model based on that.

THEORY

The term innovative behavior represents the intentional behaviour of an individual to introduce and/or apply new ideas, products, processes, and procedures to his or her work role, unit, or organization (Scott and Bruce, 1994). Similarly, innovative behaviour of an individual is a result of ideas (idea generation and idea implementation) of an individual in the workplace which results on new processes and products (Lukes and Stephan, 2017; Binnewies, et al., 2007). It is evident from the existing literature that the understanding of employee innovative behavior can range from various innovative activities. An important aspect of innovative behaviour is to communicate the innovative idea to the colleagues and managers to get the feedback (Lukes and Stephan, 2017, (Howell , et al., 2005). Once the innovative idea is communicated and permitted, further resources such as time, money and people are allocated to start the implementation process. Involving others (Howell , et al., 2005) will be an added advantage for the implementation of the innovative idea. A key challenges would be to overcome obstacles and develop the innovation outputs at the completion (Lukes and Stephan, 2017).

Yet, a solid foundation on innovative practices within the workplace results more innovative behavioral practices. Employees in organizations are rarely able to implement ideas on their own and often have to receive permission from their managers. Therefore, an excessive support for innovations (Scott and Bruce, 1994) getting from management, organization and culture may result on a positive innovative behavior in the workplace which causes to gain sustainable competitive advantage in the long run (Lukes and Stephan, 2017). Thus, this association can be theoretically rationalized from the social learning theory which discusses on different individual behaviours from observations and imitation of others by individuals at workplace.

Though, such positive outcome based behaviours are very rare in the contemporary organizations due to complexities in the world of business and some more factors which affect directly on the innovative

behaviours of individuals at the workplace (Scott and Bruce, 1994). Among all factors, power distances among individuals, management hierarchy (Daniels and Greguras, 2014) and supervisor relationship quality play a major role on innovative behaviour of individuals in the workplace. Solidity of the power or the authority among positions will or will not create a support for innovations which results on innovative behavior of individuals (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Daniels and Greguras, 2014). Theoretically, this can be rationalized through the social distance theory of power which reveals on individual psychological behaviours on power differences which are evident in the organizational set-ups (Magee and Smith, 2013).

METHODS

The main focus of this paper is to reveal the directions for studying power distance, support for innovations and employee innovative behaviour. These directions were assembled using the Systematic Literature Review. In this study, a total of 25 different articles were categorized based on the potential areas. The process begun with a selection of dependent variable (Employee Innovative Behaviour). To identify related studies, a few databases like Emerald Insight, Jstor and Google Scholar that belongs to different journals which are from various disciplines, were selected. In the next step, the search was conducted to include literature that have been within a ten years' period, starting from 2007 until 2018. Yet, few articles were taken into consideration from 90s' too as those were more relevant to the study. More articles were reviewed from the areas of types of innovations, innovative behaviour, and organizational culture dimensions. In this respect, we decided to search to articles that have indicated innovative behaviour, power distance and support for innovations. Based on the reviewed literature the conceptual model was developed.

Additionally, working definitions of the constructs were presented in below table 1.

Table 1: Working Definitions of the Constructs

Construct	Working Definition
Power Distance	Power Distance has been defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.
Innovative Behaviour	The intentional behaviour of an individual to introduce and/or apply new ideas, products, processes, and procedures to his or her work role, unit, or organization.
Support for Innovations	Managerial support can be described as a perception that an employee's supervisor is supportive of new and innovative ideas. Organizational support includes the organization making resources available for the implementation of new ideas and the encouragement of innovation and use of rewards. Organizational culture includes the context of the organization based on work tasks and environment.

Source: Scott and Bruce, 1994; Lukes and Stephan, 2017; Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Hunter, et al., 2007

RESULTS

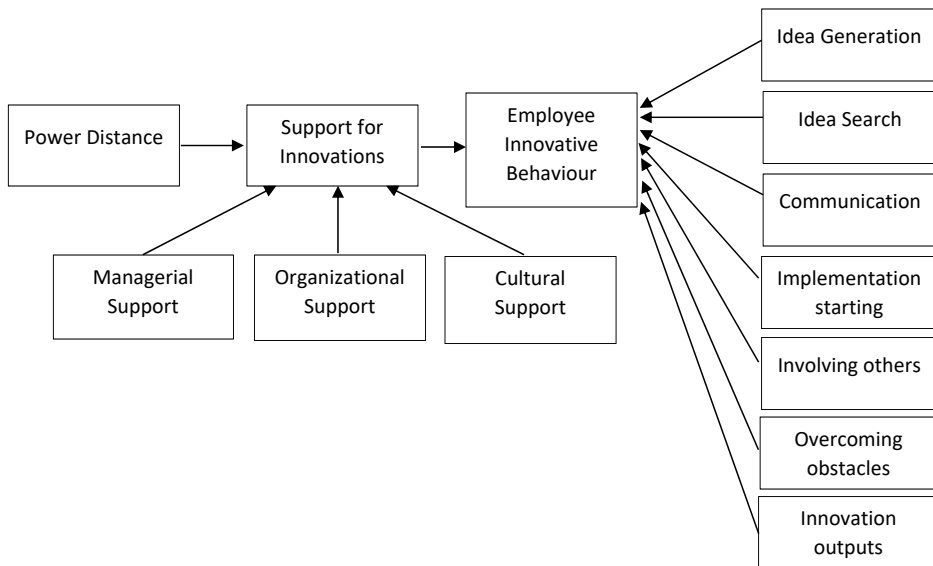


Figure 1: Model on Power Distance, Innovative Behaviour of Individuals and Support for Innovations

DISCUSSION

This paper associates and extends prior research on innovative behavior in the workplace by proposing a model of power distance, support for innovations and employee innovative behavior. In achieving the research objectives, the results of this paper based on a model developed from the systematic literature review, replicates earlier findings on establishing an association on support for innovations and employee innovative behavior at workplace (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Lukes and Stephan, 2017; Choi, et al., 2013). Similarly, the association between power distance and support for innovations in this paper is replicated from the previous literature too (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Daniels and Greguras, 2014; Magee and Smith, 2013).

Importantly, the present paper recognizes support for innovations as a common factor in both power distance and innovative behaviour of individuals. Further, analyzing the associations with the common factor comparing with the existing literature (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Daniels and Greguras, 2014; Magee and Smith, 2013), the present paper has extended the model identifying support for innovations as a mediator which operates in between power distance and innovative behaviour of individuals in a workplace.

IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, despite the importance of employee innovative behaviour in the workplace, the present paper makes a vital contribution by developing a model on power distance and innovative behaviour of individuals by displaying the importance of support for innovations. Hence, this paper provides a better understanding of how to influence employee innovative behaviour in a workplace.

Theoretically, the findings of this paper provide understandings for two main social behaviour theories; social distance theory of power and social learning theory. First, the association between power distance and support for innovations was rationalized from the social distance theory of power (Magee and Smith, 2013). Second, the association between support for innovations and employee innovative behaviour at workplace was rationalized from social learning theory (Scott and Bruce, 1994). Moreover, the direct link between power distance, support for innovations and innovative behaviour of individuals was supported from social distance theory of power as less powerful people expect a support from powerful people which results various behavioural outcomes (Magee and Smith, 2013). Therefore, it is evident that this paper has made several contributions to the social behavioural theories.

On the other hand, managerially; contemporary organizations should focus more on innovative behavioural practices within the workplace by providing enough support for innovations which leads to

become sustainable in the long run. Similarly, they should pay more attention to the power differences of managerial hierarchies to promote a positive environment for innovations at workplace. Moreover, managers can identify individuals who support more on implementing innovations within the workplace and encourage them with a proper guidance. From the model developed by the Systematic Literature Review, contemporary organizations can get a better understanding on employee innovative behaviours, power differences and support for innovations at the workplace.

For future researchers, the suggested model provides an understanding of employee innovative behavior that is measurable and widely applicable for different innovation types and employee groups. It provides a foundation on intrapreneurship within the workplace and can focus in future research avenues. Further, power distance can be aligned with the structural hierarchies of the organizations and understand how it is affecting on innovative practices of employees. In addition, they can also have a post-hoc analysis of culture as an independent variable and use power distance as a moderator for the direct association. This will represent a clear understanding of different cultural backgrounds of organizations and its impact on employee innovative behaviour.

KEYWORDS

Employee Innovative Behaviour, Support for Innovations, Power Distance

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