

LINKING HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

In an era of a dynamic, uncertain and a competitive environment, organizations need to pay attention to innovation in order to have the competitive advantage in the marketplace. The roots of innovation lie in the novel and unique ideas germinating in the human mind. Given a proper environment, employees can be a critical source of innovation. This research therefore focuses on innovative behaviour at the workplace and how effective human resource management can foster innovation. The present study develops a conceptual framework linking human resource practices, innovative work behavior. The mechanism is explained through the intervening variables of employee engagement and innovation climate.

KEYWORDS: *Innovative Work Behaviour, Human Resource Practices, Innovative Climate, Employee Engagement.*

Introduction

In a fiercely competitive business environment, organizations are increasingly focussing on creativity and innovation for getting the competitive edge in the market. Indeed, innovation is a critical determinant to enter new domains as well as to sustain performance and survive in the long run (Ancona and Caldwell, 1987). Organizations like 3M and Apple have a history of innovations and come out regularly with new or improved products on a regular basis, capturing a large share of the market. Interest in research on innovations amongst organizational scientists has continued to grow over the last few decades (Anderson et al, 2004).

With a dynamic and competitive landscape and the changing nature of work organizations, organizations need to exploit and tap the creative and innovative potential of employees as well as external stakeholders such as customers and suppliers. The foundation of all innovations is ideas, the seeds of which lie in the hearts and minds of people. As it is the people who are responsible for developing, carrying out and reacting to ideas (Van de Ven, 1986), the study of what drives individual's innovative behaviour becomes very important. In particular, human resource practices can impact the motivation of employees and consequently their innovative behaviour at work. This paper develops a conceptual model of the HR factors which could impact innovative work behaviour and the mechanism for linking human resource practices and innovative behaviour.

In the next section, we highlight the differences between creativity and innovation. This is followed by explaining the term innovative work behaviour. Subsequent sections dwell upon the various aspects of human resource management and conceptualizing the model linking HR practices with innovative work behaviour. We include within the model the intervening variables of employee engagement and organizational climate for innovation. The final section gives the concluding remarks.

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