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2016-02-19
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/19602

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Self-Reported Individual Innovative Behaviour, Individual Thinking Style, Organisational Climate for Innovation, and Leader-Member Exchange

This research focused on the construct of self-reported individual innovative behaviour in order to provide a deeper understanding into the multi-dimensional construct of innovation within an organisation. This is because innovative behaviour within an organisation drives the organisation to achieve profit and success. The focus of this research was to consider the extent to which innovative behaviours were reported as being enacted within South African organisations; as well as organisational climate, leader-member exchange, and individual thinking styles in terms of how these factors were related to and/or predictive of individual innovation.

The final sample comprised 265 South African employees working within management, product development and/or design, consulting, strategizing, advertising, or marketing (in any field). The sample was collected through non-probability, volunteer, convenience sampling. All participants were asked to complete a questionnaire pack consisting of a Self-Developed, Self-Report Demographic Questionnaire, the Self Report Measure of Individual Innovative Behaviour, the Leadership-Member Exchange Questionnaire, the Climate for Innovation Measure, and the Thinking Style Inventory.

Statistical analyses indicated that participants of this study reported engaging more frequently in the conceptual (initial) phases of innovation and less frequently in the implementation (latter) phases of innovation. In terms of organisational climate, both organisational resources and organisational support were significantly related to innovative behaviour. Organisational resources also significantly predicted innovative behaviour whereas organisational support was not found to be a significant predictor of an employee's innovative tendencies. Although LMX was significantly related to innovative behaviour, it was only a significant predictor of innovative behaviour when it was grouped with the functions of thinking styles. Innovative behaviour was also significantly and positively related to anarchic, global, internal, external, legislative, judicial, hierarchical and liberal thinking styles; and the legislative, judicial, hierarchical, global, internal, external, and liberal thinking styles significantly and positively predicted innovative behaviour; while the executive thinking style significantly and negatively predicted innovative behaviour.

These results suggested that organisations who are striving to enhance their levels of innovative behaviour should be extremely mindful of their organisational climate for innovation,

particularly the resources that are available to contribute to employees engaging in innovative behaviour, as well as of the quality of their leaders' relationships with their subordinates and their workforce's thinking styles. These findings provide a starting point from which one can work to develop effective organisational interventions, such as training programs, and / or selection and recruitment strategies, to promote and enhance individual innovative behaviour and ultimately develop the organisation.

Key words: Individual innovative behaviour, individual thinking style, organisational climate for innovation, leader-member exchange.