

The Mediating Effect of Organizational Innovation on Employee Performance within Public Sector Organizations in Dubai

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Abstract

This study aimed to empirically explore the mediating impact of organizational innovation on employee performance in Dubai government organizations. Theoretical evidence denoted that organizational innovation had a mediating impact on employee performance through augmenting the effects of other impactful constructs for instance transformational leadership and job happiness. The research in conducting the study, considered the relationships between the effects of different constructs on employee performance in public sector organizations in the government of Dubai. Apart from organizational innovation, the other constructs whose effects on employee performance in the organization were investigated in the study included transformational leadership and job happiness. The research noted that there existed very few studies that empirically examined the mediating role of organizational innovation on employee performance in the workplace. Building on preliminary evidence of literature and experience, this research postulated that organizational innovation had a mediating impact on employee performance in the organization through augmenting the effect of job happiness and transformational leadership on the same. The study employed structural equations modeling via PLS to analyse 682 valid questionnaire responses from 28 Government of Dubai Organizations. The findings indicated that organizational innovation played a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and job happiness and the performance of employees in the workplace. The data used in this study was thoroughly purified through multiple steps to ascertain that it did not bear any outliers. On arriving at the hypothesis testing, the data remaining did not indicate any multicollinearity or overlapping effect. The construct of organizational innovation showed resoundingly strong mediating influence on employee performance in comparison with other constructs. Research noted that, while transformational leadership and job happiness played a stronger direct role in impacting the performance of employees, it was essential that the leadership of the organization adopt an innovation-oriented approach to leadership in order to have better impact on performance among the employees.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As businesses go global, they have not just been faced with the challenge of dealing with cultural differences whilst maintaining performance levels (Comu, Unsal, & Taylor, 2011) but have also had to deal with collaborative development within organizations and between organizations (Niebecker,

Eager, & Kubitza, 2008). From physical teams to virtually managed project teams, high project transparency, sufficient methods of control, clearly defined goals, predefined project methods, efficiencies in communication and human capital assets, contemporary managers have to consistently improve their management approaches and hone

them to the changing dynamics of the business environment if organizational success is to be achieved (Nedelko & Potocan, 2013).

The dynamic business environment that has been facilitated by among others globalization and technological development dictates that the contemporary and the future management of organizations has to involve networked organizational structures, virtual project team and virtual development teams and innovative approaches for product development and/or service provision. The stature and positioning of United Arab Emirates in the world map is enhanced by the visionary and transformational leadership of Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid, the vice president and ruler of Dubai. Under the patronage of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed, president of the UAE and heir of the throne from the founding father of UAE Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid has reinforced and promoted nation-wide initiatives towards innovation in the public sector organizations. These initiatives have been identified as among the contributors of high performance work environments in the public sector organizations Dubai and have also set a proper example for private sector organizations operating in the country and in the region. To this extent, the city of Dubai and the country of UAE in general have been able to make big development strides all of which can be related to intensive investment in innovation and support of innovative efforts. The above in despite, there have been very limited empirical evidences of research documenting the relationship between this investment in innovation and actual development as well as employee performance in Dubai. This study is keen on identifying that relationship in order to promote better understanding of the mediating effect of transformational leadership on employee performance in the organization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Creativity and innovation are interrelated terms with minute distinctions existing in documented research

(West & Farr, 1990). (Mumford & Gustafson, 1988), in understanding of the thin line between the two lines attempt distinctive definition mentioning that creativity refers to the development and general of new concepts while innovation can be classified as the adoption of new concepts in the performance of duties (Kanter, 1988); (Van de Ven, 1986). Concurrent research makes the all-too similar distinction that creativity refers to the creation of knowledge or doing something for the first time in an unprecedented way (Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993). Innovation on the other hand refers to the improvisation of processes and/or products externally. Further evidence of research concludes that in the process of creativity and innovation, there are multiple steps which all add up to ensure that knowledge is effectively captured and utilized for the improvement of organizational processes (Kanter, 1988).

Deducting from (Kanter, 1988) perspective, innovation starts at an individual level with the recognition of problem which is followed by the creative development of ideas of solving the problems. The next stage in the process involves the seeking of financial and experiential support for the development of the idea. After this, the innovative person moves further to the completion of the idea by the production of a prototype which opens up the idea for further adoption, experience, critiqued, development, mass-production, diffusion and/or institutionalization (Kanter, 1988). The above explanation supports the multi-stage characteristic notion of innovation, whereby there are different levels, different activities and different individuals in different levels. Since innovation process is in real terms pigeonholed by a sporadic turn of activities as opposed to linear sequence, individuals are likely to interact and exhibit a combination of any of these attitudes at different times (Schroeder, Van de Ven, Scudder, & Polley, 1989).

The United Arab Emirates as a country has invested heavily on innovation and taken every opportunity to make sure that organizational innovation is

fostered. in a show of commitment towards innovation, the country launched the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation in 2014 at the World Governments Summit (Gov.Dubai, 2019); (OECD, 2016). This centre according to research was established to stimulate and enrich the culture of innovation within the government sector through the development of an integrated innovation framework and to ensure the attainment of the visionary Dubai 2021 strategic plan that banks greatly on innovation. Currently, the intensively under implementation Dubai Strategic Plan 2021 describes the future of Dubai through holistic and complementary perspectives, starting with the people and the society who have always been, and will always be, the bedrock of the city (Gov.Dubai, 2019). This aspect describes the characteristics that Dubai's people need to have to deliver on the city's aspirations in all areas, and examines the society needed to support and empower these individuals in achieving their goals. The city's vision for 2021 comprises six themes, theme (1) The People: "City of Happy, Creative & Empowered People", theme (2) The Society: "An Inclusive & Cohesive Society", theme (3) The Experience: "The Preferred Place to Live, Work & Visit", theme (4) The Place: "A Smart & Sustainable City", theme (5) The Economy: "A Pivotal Hub in the Global Economy", theme (6) The Government: "A Pioneering and Excellent Government". To this extent, a transformational and innovative Government organization(s) is well expressed by adopting innovative tools and techniques such as Dubai Future Accelerators, which is an intensive nine-weeks program pairing the world's most exciting technology companies with leading government organizations to create transformational solutions for services in an effort to gain competitive advantage in any organization.

It encourages all organizations to improve the quality of their products/services through constant efficiency and effectiveness in their operations, production, services and working environment. This

implies, organizational innovation influenced by the views of managers that focus on and promote innovation. Research indicates that transformational leadership can be observed when both the leader and followers had reached the highest levels of motivation and morale among them (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006); (Guay, 2011). Additionally, (Cochan, 2014)) reports that most organizations in both sectors (public and private) are seeking to achieve the innovation, which contributes to the survival over the long term, sustained business attraction (HUB) and excellent performance. (Cochan, 2014) in his in-depth investigation accentuates that it is essential that all organizations devote considerable efforts and engage themselves in supporting continuous processes of innovation. In the case of Dubai, through The General Secretariat of the Executive Council core functions of Strategy Management & Governance, Dubai The model Centre for Services Improvement and Dubai Excellence Program, operations, products and services in the government sector are consistently improved to ensure outstanding performance through the application of significant policy, principles, process and operational changes. These changes arguably focus on organizational innovation, entrepreneurial and pioneering customer experiences and people/human capital excellence, which are, supported and fostered through transformational leadership. Research supports the foregoing informing that, the increase in organizational innovation is not the result of macroeconomic policies or financial balance, but the result of visionary and technical progress towards innovation and quality of human, structural and operational factors that are heavily influenced by investment in knowledge, education, research and development (Seleim, Ashour, & Bontis, 2007).

III. METHODOLOGY

The whole process of research included the identification of the problem, the gathering of peer-reviewed extant literature on the subject matter, the identification of the type of data to be collected, the

constructs to be measured and the designing of the tool for collection of the data. The research then sought necessary approvals across multiple organizations and the faculty and was able to deploy the data collection instrument in order to collect data for the research. This was followed with a rigorous process of analysis of the collected data in order to ensure that the deductions made were objective and non-biased. Finally, the research conducted a broad-

based discussion that included the discussion of the findings in the context of literature. This was followed by a conclusion that established the achievements and the shortcomings of the research and paved way for future research to improve the research by pointing out areas deserving improvement. The below is the figurative representation of the research process:-

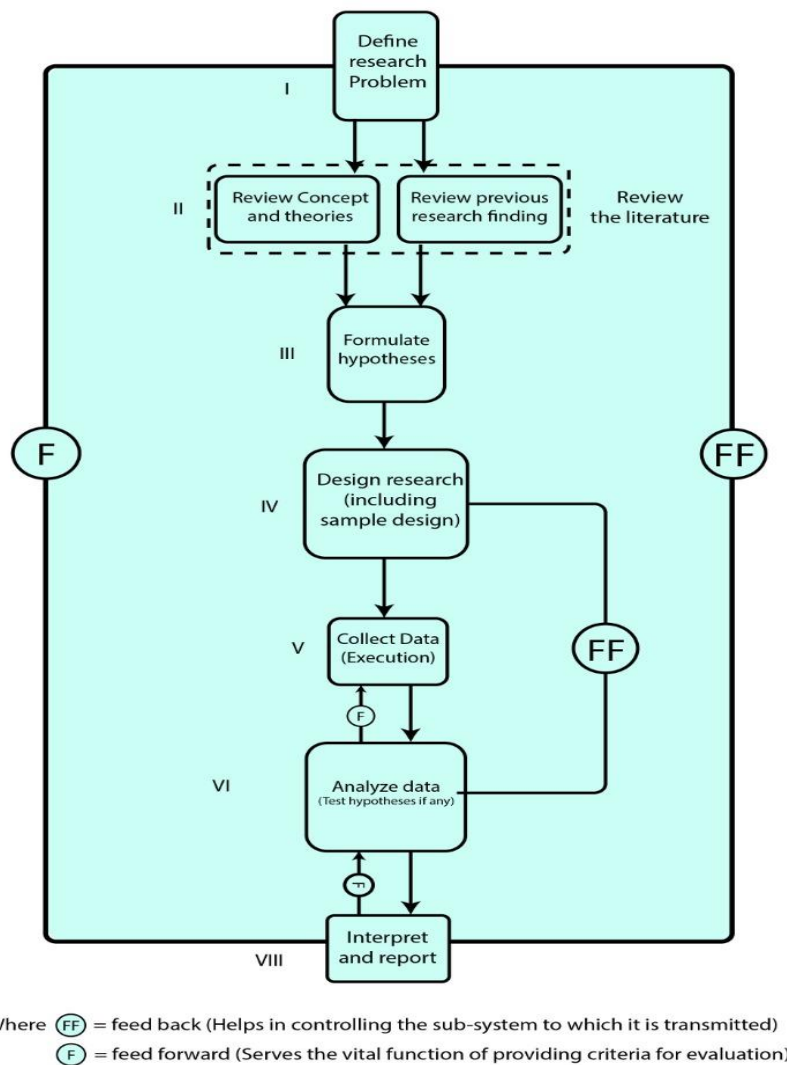


Figure 1. Research process

On a narrower scope, the methodology of the research itself was based on positivism philosophy and deductive approach. According evidence of research in research methods, this was so as to ensure that the research collected numerical data and utilized this to guide the understanding of the

research. The research utilized a structured questionnaire which was distributed to a sample of 700 participants across 28 Governmental organizations in Dubai.

The sampling approach taken was random sampling and the research utilized the random sampling

approach in order to calculate the number of participants in each of the organization that would be representative of the entire population. Through this approach, the research summed up all the sample sizes in the different organizations and came forth with 700 samples. The following is the formula utilized in the computation of the ideal sample for each of the organizations:-

$$\text{Sample } - s = \frac{z^2 \times N \times p \times q}{N \times E^2 + z^2 \times p \times q}$$

Where, s = sample size for finite population (f<0.05), z = 0.05 or 95% confidence level, N = to the finite population size and the maximum population variability (p=q=0.05). The assumed standard sampling error E = 3%.

For this research, the total number N of the finite population was 47, 961 as the research only focussed on participants in white collar job descriptions in the government organizations in Dubai which accounts for 54% of the entire population of employees in the government organization. Using the computation above, the below tabulation shows the number of participants that the research was seeking responses from per organization:-

Table 1. Total populations N and Sample size S in Dubai public sector organizations

#	Organization	N1 (Suggested Designation)	P	S
1	The Executive Council	59	0.13%	1
2	Dubai Police General Headquarters	12287	27.6%	194
3	Dubai Municipality	6725	15.1%	106
4	Roads & Transport Authority	3443	7.7%	54
5	Dubai Electricity & Water Authority	6097	13.7%	96
6	Dubai Health Authority	6887	15.5%	108
7	Department of Economic Development	335	0.8%	5
8	Lands Department	334	0.8%	5
9	Dubai Courts Department	670	1.5%	11
10	Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing	258	0.6%	4
11	Community Development Authority	140	0.3%	2
12	Islamic Affairs & Charitable Activities Department	708	1.6%	11
13	Dubai Airports	1725	3.9%	27
14	Dubai Civil Aviation Authority	62	0.1%	1
15	Dubai Media Incorporated	765	1.7%	12

16	Dubai Customs	1602	3.6%	25
17	Smart Dubai Office*	99	0.2%	2
18	Dubai Chamber	104	0.2%	2
19	Public Prosecution	364	0.8%	6
20	Awqaf & Miners Affairs Foundation	90	0.2%	1
21	Knowledge & Human Development Authority	408	0.9%	6
22	Dubai Statistics Center	96	0.2%	2
23	Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services	827	1.9%	13
24	Mohammed Bin Rashid Establishment for Housing	118	0.3%	2
25	Dubai Culture & Arts' Authority	188	0.4%	3
26	Dubai Sports Council	51	0.1%	1
27	Dubai Civil Defense	971	2.0%	14
28	Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs	2549	5.3%	37
Total		47,961	1	700

The research was successful in collecting 686 responses out of 702 questionnaires distributed which represented a solid over 97% response rate.

IV. MEASURES

Different measures of establishing reliability and validity of the data collected were deployed through the help of Statistics Package for Social Sciences v.25. The methods for cleaning and verifying the reliability of the data included:- skewness and kurtosis measures to establish normalcy. The following table shows the 31 items under study for the four constructs and their skewness and kurtosis values which all fell between ± 2 and ± 7 , respectively. Hence, the researchers concluded that the data value for all items was appropriately modeled using a normal distribution. Specifically, the skew values ranged between -1.407 and -0.603; while the kurtosis values ranged between -0.675 and 2.642.

Table 2. Skewness and Kurtosis reliability of test parameters measurement

	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Std. Error of Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>Std. Error of Kurtosis</i>
II1	-1.057	0.094	0.768	0.188
II2	-0.811	0.094	0.094	0.188
II3	-1.132	0.094	1.103	0.188
II4	-0.613	0.094	-0.675	0.188
II5	-1.091	0.094	1.298	0.188
II6	-1.018	0.094	0.973	0.188
II7	-1.084	0.094	0.821	0.188
II8	-1.043	0.094	0.735	0.188
IM1	-1.122	0.094	0.937	0.188
IM2	-1.118	0.094	1.093	0.188
IM3	-0.974	0.094	0.560	0.188
IM4	-1.081	0.094	1.040	0.188
IS1	-0.796	0.094	0.400	0.188

IS2	-0.938	0.094	0.519	0.188
IS3	-0.885	0.094	0.440	0.188
IS4	-1.020	0.094	0.719	0.188
IC1	-0.819	0.094	0.209	0.188
IC2	-0.806	0.094	0.180	0.188
IC3	-0.850	0.094	0.250	0.188
IC4	-0.908	0.094	0.317	0.188
PSI1	-1.238	0.094	1.247	0.188
PSI2	-1.057	0.094	0.669	0.188
PSI3	-1.059	0.094	0.665	0.188
PTI1	-0.928	0.094	0.516	0.188
PTI2	-0.966	0.094	0.706	0.188
PTI3	-1.046	0.094	0.764	0.188
AI1	-0.999	0.094	0.491	0.188
AI2	-0.952	0.094	0.415	0.188
AI3	-0.618	0.094	-0.611	0.188
AI4	-0.603	0.094	-0.556	0.188
AI5	-0.955	0.094	0.366	0.188
AI6	-0.489	0.094	-0.650	0.188
OPT1	-1.151	0.094	1.609	0.188
OPT2	-1.245	0.094	2.025	0.188
OPT3	-1.407	0.094	2.342	0.188
OPT4	-0.658	0.094	-0.506	0.188
OPT5	-1.027	0.094	0.692	0.188
OPT6	-0.951	0.094	1.323	0.188
OPT7	-1.092	0.094	1.693	0.188
SR1	-0.869	0.094	0.905	0.188
SR2	-1.131	0.094	1.450	0.188
SR3	-1.088	0.094	1.617	0.188
SR4	-1.353	0.094	2.642	0.188
SR5	-1.266	0.094	1.859	0.188
PR1	-1.144	0.094	0.897	0.188

PR2	-0.861	0.094	0.166	0.188
PR3	-0.780	0.094	-0.300	0.188
PR4	-1.030	0.094	0.905	0.188
PR5	-1.003	0.094	0.733	0.188
LG1	-1.232	0.094	1.231	0.188
LG2	-0.980	0.094	0.493	0.188
LG3	-0.866	0.094	-0.025	0.188
LG4	-0.776	0.094	-0.176	0.188
LG5	-1.087	0.094	1.071	0.188
LG6	-1.096	0.094	0.673	0.188

Key: II: Idealised Influence, IM: Inspirational Motivation, IS: Intellectual Stimulation, IC: Individual Consideration, PSI: ProcesS Innovation, PTI: ProducT Innovation, AI: Administrative Innovation, OPT: OPTimism, SR: Social Relationships, PR: PRocess, LG: Learning and Growth

Other measures that established the validity to go forth with the model testing are summarized below:-

- A sample size of 671 was sufficient for EFA (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012).
- The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$) (Field, 2000).
- The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.975, which was excellent (Kaiser, 1974); (Hutchenson & Sofroniou, 1999).
- As shown in Table 4.15, each item had a commonality value of >0.5 (Field, 2000)
- The total variance was 67.257%, i.e., $>50\%$ (Podaskoff & Organ, 1986).
- The variance for the first factor was 49.017%, i.e., $<50\%$.

The cronbach alpha and composite reliability test of the main constructs values are provided in table 3, below:-

Table 3. Cronbach alpha and Composite reliability values

Construct	$\alpha (>0.7)$	CR (> 0.7)
II	0.958	0.965
IM	0.945	0.961
IS	0.949	0.963
IC	0.923	0.946
TL	0.980	0.981
PSI	0.914	0.946
PTI	0.933	0.957
AI	0.942	0.954
OI	0.963	0.967
OPT	0.910	0.931
SR	0.898	0.925
JH	0.940	0.949
PR	0.902	0.927
LG	0.915	0.934
EP	0.948	0.955

Key: TL: Transformational Leadership, II: Idealized Influence, IM: Inspirational Motivation, IS: Intellectual Stimulation, IC: Individual Consideration, OI: Organizational Innovation, PSI: Process Innovation, PTI: Product Innovation, AI: Administrative Innovation, JH: Job Happiness, OPT: Optimism, SR: Social Relationships, EP: Employee Performance, PR: Process, LG: Learning and Growth.

The evidence showed that they all fulfilled the requirements for hypotheses testing to go on.

V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the research showed that there was a strong mediating relationship of organizational innovation on the impact of transformational leadership and job happiness on the employee performance in the organization. The structural model was evaluated by determining the direct and indirect relationships existing between the exogenous and endogenous latent variables (Henseler, et al., 2014). Here, the research assessed the mediation between the organisational innovation in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Determination of the mediating effects in the structural equation model helped in assessing the relationship between the independent and dependent

variables in comparison to the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, with a mediation construct.(Field, 2000) defined mediation as a situation which describes the association between the predictor and outcome variables based on their relationship with another variable (i.e., mediator).

In concordance, Hair et al. (2017) before testing the mediating effects, the research implemented the (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) model and then bootstrapped the sample distribution for all the indirect and direct effects. This approach displayed better statistical power in comparison to the Sobel test. The results showed that organizational innovation mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted and showed the values of ($\beta = 0.314$, $t = 9.073$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 1. Results for assessing the mediatory effects

Hypo	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
H6	TL→OI→EP	0.314	0.035	9.073	0.000	Supported

Key: TL: Transformational Leadership, OI: Organizational Innovation, JH: Job Happiness, EP: Employee Performance

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