Research Article

Antecedents of innovative work behavior in digital age for textile industry; a literature-based perspective

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Abstract: This study examines the factors influencing Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) within China's textile sector, focusing on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Social Capital (SC), Cognitive Style (CS), Organizational Climate (OC), and Self-Efficacy (SE). Innovation is essential for organizational success and economic competitiveness, particularly in sectors like textiles. While innovation research has been extensive in developed countries, there is limited research on individual-level innovative behaviors in developing countries like China. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring how these factors affect IWB and their interrelationships. It also provides practical insights for human resource managers on fostering innovation in China's textile industry. By promoting IWB, organizational behavior and management by offering a theoretical framework to support innovation effectively. The study highlights the importance of high-quality LMX relationships that promote trust and creativity, the role of social capital in knowledge sharing and collaboration, and the influence of cognitive style on decision-making. Additionally, a supportive organizational climate that fosters autonomy, communication, and risk-taking is crucial for driving innovation. This research aims to enhance innovation capacities in developing economies, particularly within China's textile industry.

I. Introduction

Organizations must innovate to remain competitive and adaptable in today's dynamic business environment. Those failing to innovate risk decline and obsolescence. Scholars argue that mere continuity in producing the same products and services is insufficient for survival. Innovation is also critical to a nation's economic competitiveness. Historically, innovation has been associated with research and development (R&D) activities. However, recent perspectives emphasize the role of human creativity and tacit knowledge in driving innovation, which may or may not involve R&D. The manufacturing industry, a significant economic driver in countries like the European Union and Singapore, exemplifies the dynamic nature of innovation. This study focuses on the Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) of employees in China's textile sector, exploring factors like Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Social Capital (SC), Cognitive Style (CS), Organizational Climate (OC), and Self-Efficacy (SE). Innovation is a crucial determinant of organizational and economic performance (Shahzad, I. A. et al., 2018; Shahzad, I. A., Farrukh, & Yasmin, 2020). However, in developing countries, studies on innovation remain underdeveloped. In China, where innovation is vital for industrial growth, limited research has explored individual-level innovative behaviors, especially within the textile industry. The study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the factors influencing IWB and uncovering hidden relationships among them. Although individual, organizational, and environmental factors have been recognized as innovation determinants, individual factors are particularly impactful. Despite the significance of IWB, limited research has addressed this concept within the context of China's textile industry. Furthermore, existing studies often overlook knowledge workers in this field, despite their growing importance. This research focuses on contextualizing IWB within the textile sector, examining key factors such as LMX, SC, CS, OC, and SE.

Significance of the Study: Innovative Work Behavior is critical to organizational survival and success. This study contributes to understanding how organizations can foster IWB among their employees. By addressing contextual gaps in innovation research, particularly in the textile industry, the findings provide valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners. The research offers practical guidance for human resource managers in China's textile sector, helping them identify and leverage key factors influencing IWB. By enhancing employees' innovative behaviors, organizations can

remain competitive and sustain long-term growth. Moreover, this study enriches the fields of organizational behavior, social sciences, and management, offering a theoretical framework for professionals to promote innovation effectively.

II. Business Literature on Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) is a crucial factor for the long-term success of organizations, especially in knowledgeintensive service industries. Knowledge workers – whose responsibilities include development, creativity, and problemsolving – are essential in the continuous evolution of organizational practices. Their involvement in ideation, concept development, and implementation is central to innovation within companies (Zhou et al., 2020; West and Fam, 1989). These workers' creative behaviors are integral to incremental innovation that addresses customer needs (Avlonitis et al., 2001). The focus of the study is to explore the innovative behaviors of knowledge workers and the process through which these behaviors manifest.

Definition of IWB: The definition of innovation in the context of work behavior is not universally agreed upon, as there are many varying interpretations in the literature (Khan et al., 2020; Patterson, 2000). West and Farr (1990) define innovation as the intentional introduction and application of novel ideas, processes, products, or methods aimed at benefiting individuals, groups, organizations, or society. This definition highlights the social aspect of innovation, as it involves collaboration and interaction among innovators and those affected by their work (Jain, 2010). The study adopts this definition and focuses on how the interaction of various factors fosters innovative work behavior among knowledge workers. The study adopts a broader perspective of IWB, defining it as the activities undertaken by employees to create, apply, and implement ideas, products, processes, and methods that contribute to their work, department, or organization (Akram et al., 2020). These behaviors include seeking new technologies, suggesting new ways of achieving goals, adopting new working methods, and obtaining resources to implement ideas.

Dimensions of IWB: IWB is a multi-stage process, where individual creative behaviors manifest at different stages of innovation. Kanter's (1988) model of innovation, which outlines stages such as idea generation, partnership building, idea realization, and commercialization, is employed in this study. This model is suitable as it describes how individual workers contribute to each stage of innovation. The study emphasizes that while innovation involves several stages, the individual behaviors at each stage contribute to the larger organizational process. These behaviors include ideation, idea generation, and idea implementation.

III. Initiation Stage; Opportunity Exploration and Idea Generation

The first stage of innovation involves identifying opportunities and generating ideas. Knowledge workers are crucial in recognizing opportunities for improvement or innovation (Krueger, 2000). Opportunity exploration is the process through which workers identify new possibilities by noticing inconsistencies or issues in existing practices. This stage may involve improving current services or identifying unaddressed customer needs (Farr and Ford, 1990). In this study, opportunity exploration is defined as identifying new opportunities, often resulting from discontinuities or issues in existing systems (Mumford et al., 1996). Idea generation occurs when knowledge workers engage in the process of creating new ideas for products, services, or processes. It involves linking and revising existing ideas to propose solutions for problems or improvements in performance (De Jong et al., 2003; : Shahzad, I. A. et al., 2018 Shahzad, & Bhatti, 2008). The ability to integrate and adapt ideas is crucial for innovation (Mumford et al., 1997). This stage does not necessarily follow a strict sequence and can involve continuous iterations of exploring opportunities, generating ideas, and assessing their feasibility (Darwish et al., 2020).

Implementation Stage: Idea Promotion and Application

The implementation stage begins once an idea is chosen for development and testing. At this stage, the innovation process transitions from conceptualization to practical application, where ideas are turned into prototypes or new services. Knowledge workers play a key role in this phase by developing, testing, and commercializing new ideas (De Jong et al., 2003). In many organizations, innovative ideas do not originate solely from designated innovators but from individuals who champion ideas and seek to overcome organizational barriers (Shane, 1994). These champions are often crucial in promoting and securing support for innovative ideas (Afsar et al., 2020). The act of championing an idea involves advocacy, resource mobilization, persuasion, and risk-taking behaviors (Kmieciak, 2020). Application, or the execution of the idea, occurs when knowledge workers apply the innovation in real-world settings. This can include the development of new services or modifications to existing workflows (Knezović and Drkić, 2020). The ability to perform effectively during the implementation phase is critical for success, as it involves aligning new services with customer needs and ensuring they are easy to use and understand (Nguyen et al., 2020).

Past studies on IWB

Numerous studies have explored the innovation behavior of work (IWB) and sought to identify its determinants. For instance, Scott and Bruce (1994) developed and tested a model of individual work behavior related to innovation. They hypothesized that there is both direct and indirect relationships between leadership capacity, individual problemsolving styles, and the workgroup's interaction, all of which influence innovation behavior in the workplace and perceptions of the innovation climate. The research also highlighted task characteristics as a moderating variable, an area previously underexplored in individual-level studies. Structural equation modeling was used to examine the boundaries of the research, focusing on knowledge workers from a large R&D office in the United States. Their model explained 37% of the variance in innovation work behavior (Zhou et al., Rasool, & Ma, 2020). Moreover, leadership factors, innovation support, managerial role expectations, career stage, and systematic problem-solving styles were found to have significant relationships with innovation behavior in the workplace.

An empirical study by De Jong and Kemp (2003) investigated the motivations behind individual employees' creative work behavior, which is considered an essential driver of continuous innovation. Seven constructs were identified from existing literature that had often been discussed as drivers of innovation but not examined as determinants of individual partners' creative behavior. Data was collected from 360 individuals working in knowledge-intensive service organizations. Regression analysis revealed that job challenge perception, autonomy, strategic thinking, and external interactions were positively correlated with creative work behavior. Additionally, working in a competitive market environment was found to have a positive influence on creative work behavior. However, a strongly supportive innovation climate and a high demand for change did not have a direct impact on innovation behavior at work. Oldham and Cummings (1996) conducted a study involving 171 employees from two manufacturing plants to examine the individual and collective contributions of personal characteristics to employee creativity, as well as three organizational attributes: job complexity, feedback support, and monitoring control. The study found that employees exhibited the most creative work when they possessed the right characteristics aligned with creativity, engaged in complex and challenging tasks, and received adequate and impartial feedback.

In their research on the factors explaining individual innovative work behavior, Nazir, Shafi, Asadullah, Qun, and Khadim (2020) explored how expected behavior influences work performance outcomes (positive performance) and the organization's image (expected risks and benefits). Their findings showed significant effects of all three outcome expectations on innovative work behavior. These expectations were shaped by various cognitive and individual factors, including the organization's support for innovation, the quality of boss-employee relationships, job requirements for innovation, the employee's reputation as a leader, and personal dissatisfaction with the status quo.

To explore the relationship between job demands and innovation behavior in the workplace, Liu, Xu, and Zhang (2020) conducted a study supported by the environmental fit theory and social exchange theory. They identified perceived fairness as a mediating variable influencing the relationship between job demands and innovation behavior. Janssen (2000) further explained that perceived fairness is linked to the balance between effort (input) and reward (output). Data was collected through a mail survey from 170 non-managerial employees working in the food production sector in a Dutch company. The study indicated that the need for firms to innovate was strongly correlated with innovation behavior when the fairness of reward for effort outweighed the unfairness of insufficient rewards. Employee engagement in relation to innovative behavior at work has also been investigated. Jafri (2010) conducted an observational study on the impact of engagement among 80 retail managers on their creative work behavior. The importance of this study lies in the gap in previous research exploring the relationship between these two factors. Examining engagement from a multidimensional perspective, which included emotional, continuous, and normative engagement, the study found that emotional and continuous engagement were significant predictors of positive and negative relationships, while no significant relationship was found between normative engagement and innovative work behavior. Overall, the organizational commitment explained 14% of the variance in employees' innovative work behavior.

Additionally, Rahman, Kistyanto, and Surjanti (2020) conducted a study examining the relationship between selfleadership skills and employees' innovative workplace behavior in six Israeli organizations through structured surveys. The study achieved an 87% response rate, with 175 completed surveys returned from employees and their managers. The analysis using AMOS software revealed that the three-dimensional self-leadership model was positively associated with ratings of innovative behaviors at work, both from the employees and their managers. Furthermore, creative work

behavior was also influenced by the respondents' pay and working hours. Aggarwal and Bhargava (2010) conducted an experimental study to determine whether psychological contracts, including transactional and relational psychological contracts, influence creative work behavior and psychological commitment among Indian employees. The study revealed that transactional psychological contracts were significantly related to creative work behavior and possessive mindsets, whereas relational psychological contracts did not significantly predict innovative work behavior.

The role of creative work behavior in service delivery was explored by Slatten (2011), who investigated the relationship between two antecedents: the quality of management relationships and job role benefits, with employee happiness serving as a mediator for innovation behavior. Data was collected from 279 frontline employees working in the hospitality industry using a survey method. The results showed that both the quality of management relationships and the job role benefits were directly related to employee well-being and innovative work behavior. Furthermore, a direct connection was found between employee happiness and creative work behavior. At the same time, the relationship between management relationship quality, job role benefits, and innovation behavior was mediated by employee wellbeing. The study suggests that it is crucial to evaluate employee emotions, as they have been found to impact creative work behavior, which is essential when delivering services to customers (Slatten, 2011; Miller & Miller, 2020). Finally, Klevsen and Street (2001) highlighted that innovation studies often evaluate creative work behavior from a unidimensional perspective. As a result, these studies fail to capture the full scope of individual innovation behavior. The authors, therefore, aimed to examine creative work behavior from a multidimensional viewpoint. By the end of their study, 289 innovation-related behaviors were identified and categorized into five dimensions: opportunity exploration, promotion, structure investigation, support, and application. Data were collected from 225 employees using a convenience sampling method and analyzed using structural equation modeling. Although their study did not reveal that innovation behavior in the workplace includes a multidimensional measure, it did demonstrate that innovation behavior in the workplace is complex and encompasses several aspects, with a high reliability coefficient of 0.95 (Samma et al., 2020).

Impact of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): Modern knowledge-intensive organizations adopt distinctive approaches compared to traditional models, emphasizing team-driven projects that prioritize productivity, innovation, and operational improvement (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta & Kramer, 2004; Schermuly, Meyer, & Dämmer, 2013). Leadership significantly impacts employee practices, guiding performance, allocating resources, and serving as information gatekeepers (Amabile et al., 2004; Zuberi & Khattak, 2021). The relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and innovative work behavior (IWB) is explored through social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Supervisors, as representatives of organizations, influence employees' responses through actions perceived as organizational behaviors (Sanders et al., 2010; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson & Sowa, 1986). Fair treatment and equitable rewards drive employees to exhibit creativity, especially in challenging work environments (Janssen, 2000; Wei, Li, Li & Chen, 2021).

High-quality LMX relationships promote trust, emotional support, and professional growth, enabling employees to embrace innovation and reduce perceived risks associated with creative ideas (Graen & Scandura, 1987; Albrecht & Hall, 1991, 1992). Research highlights that such relationships facilitate open communication and collaborative idea generation, boosting IWB (Tierney et al., 1999; Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Jung, Song & Yoon, 2021). Leadership-dependent relationships evolve through role-building processes, transitioning from transactional interactions to empowering partnerships (Fang, Meng, Liu & Liu, 2021). Supervisors actively enhance subordinates' skills and confidence, fostering creative output (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Amabile, 1983). Leadership styles emphasizing collaboration and participatory decision-making create environments conducive to creativity (Pan, Chiu & Wu, 2021; Zhou, Rasool, Yang & Asghar, 2021). Ultimately, LMX fosters innovation by nurturing autonomy, trust, and mutual respect. Empirical evidence underscores the positive impact of high-quality LMX relationships on IWB, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors (Robert & Vandenberghe, 2021; Cai et al., 2021). These findings highlight the vital role of leadership in driving creativity within modern organizations.

Impact of Social Capital (SC) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): Organizational knowledge thrives on the exchange of information among members, facilitated by socialization – a process of face-to-face interaction, mutual understanding, and trust-building. Socialization fosters shared beliefs and communication norms, critical components of social capital that enhance political, economic, and individual well-being (Oh, Myung-Ho, & Labianca, 2004; Shui et al., 2021). This dynamic promotes knowledge sharing, where tacit knowledge is transformed into explicit forms, enriching organizational innovation. The individual's social capital, built on interpersonal networks, often serves both personal

and organizational interests (Inkpen & Tsang, 2005). Employee innovation is strongly linked to their social capital. Social interactions, including informal exchanges, encourage knowledge transfer, enhancing creativity (Losada & Heaphy, 2004; Dai & Gu, 2021). Moreover, socialization within and beyond workplaces fosters trust, collaboration, and motivation to share expertise (Oh, Myung-Ho, & Labianca, 2004; Ding, Shao, & Chen, 2021). Communication networks significantly affect the success of knowledge transfer, particularly in research and development contexts (Zahr, Ireland, & Hitt, 2000). Despite advancements in communication technology, face-to-face interactions remain crucial for effective knowledge sharing (Zhang et al., 2021; Burt, 2000, cited in Amar & Juneja, 2008).

In knowledge-intensive services, external contacts with clients, competitors, and other stakeholders play a pivotal role. These interactions enable feedback collection, idea exploration, and skill development, ultimately driving innovation (De Jong, Den Hartog, & Zoetermeer, 2003). Effective social capital management ensures valuable information flows into the organization (Reick & Benbasat, 2000; Alguezaui & Filieri, 2010). Research underscores the need for continuous engagement with external communities and a shift from traditional R&D models to broader organizational networks (Alguezaui & Filieri, 2010). Social capital thus emerges as a foundational element for fostering innovation and enhancing knowledge work, despite ongoing debates about its precise impact (Yu et al., 2021).

Impact of Cognitive Style (CS) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): Recent studies on organizational behavior emphasize the importance of psychological and emotional factors in understanding complex corporate dynamics (Chuang, Yeh, & Lin, 2021; Krueger, 2000). Cognitive style, defined as an individual's preferred way of processing and evaluating information (Allinson & Hayes, 2000), significantly influences decision-making and problem-solving approaches (Dutta & Thornhill, 2008). Research suggests that visual methods of information processing are often better suited for creative tasks (Allinson et al., 2000). Using Kirton's Adaptation-Innovation Theory, Buttner and Gryskiewicz (1993) found that innovators are more likely to establish new ventures, whereas adaptors focus on managerial activities (Zheng, 2022). Similarly, Allinson et al. (2000) observed that innovators in growth-oriented firms are more intuitive than mid-level managers, a finding supported by Armstrong and Hird (2009). However, inconsistencies exist; for instance, Cools and Broeck (2006) reported no differences in creative styles between innovators and adaptors, though innovators scored higher in planning.

Studies also link cognitive style to entrepreneurial motivation and self-efficacy. Lei et al. (2021) argue that intuition dominates early stages of entrepreneurship, while analytical approaches become critical later for managing finances and marketing. Barbosa et al. (2007) and Yilmaz (2021) extended these findings by identifying self-efficacy dimensions, noting that analytical thinkers perform better in later stages of entrepreneurial processes. Kickul et al. (2009) further highlighted cognitive style's influence on entrepreneurial performance across stages, with intuition aiding opportunity recognition and analytical thinking supporting execution. However, much research remains focused on students, limiting insights into organizational contexts. This body of work underscores the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the relationship between cognitive style and behavior, suggesting that analytical thinkers may excel in structured environments that reinforce their logical approach to decision-making.

Impact of Organizational Climate (OC) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): Creative work behavior is significantly influenced by environmental factors, as highlighted by Hassi, Rohlfer, and Jebsen (2021). A supportive environment fosters innovative thinking by encouraging the expression of new ideas and enabling their implementation (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Key elements of such environments include autonomy, collaboration, open communication, and prompt feedback, as described by Hartmann (2006) and Dombrowski et al. (2007). However, no universal framework exists for creating an innovation-friendly climate, and successful implementation often requires strategic change management (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Risk-taking is integral to innovation, though it is often constrained by fear of failure in professional settings (Zhang et al., 2021; Borgelt & Falk, 2007). Effective leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering a culture where employees feel supported in taking calculated risks (Farson & Keyes, 2002). The interplay between risk management and innovation presents a paradox, with organizations needing to balance experimentation with safeguarding operational stability (Borgelt & Falk, 2007). Teamwork and mutual trust are critical for enhancing creative behavior, allowing individuals to share ideas without fear of criticism (Roger, 1954; Wang & Jiang, 2021). A supportive professional environment promotes open communication and mitigates the fear of failure, thereby encouraging creativity (Axtell et al., 2000; De Brentani, 2001). Moreover, innovation is a social process reliant on collaboration and resource-sharing (Axtell et al., 2000). Finally, organizational culture profoundly impacts risk-taking and creativity. Mature organizations may exhibit less risk-taking behavior than younger ones, highlighting the

importance of fostering innovation-supportive cultures across all organizational stages (Deiss, 2004; Liu et al., 2021; Yukl, 2006).

IV. Literature Gaps

The literature highlights key issues impacting innovative work behavior, self-efficacy, leadership-member communication, social capital, cognitive style, and organizational climate, particularly in China's textile industry. These topics are critical for understanding innovation within knowledge-intensive sectors, where continuous innovation is necessary for economic development. Previous studies have shown that organizational factors such as leader-member exchange (LMX), social capital, cognitive style, and climate significantly influence innovative work behaviors (Robben, 1999). However, while most of these studies have been conducted in developed countries, there is limited research in developing countries like China, especially within the textile industry. Research indicates that organizations fostering an innovative work climate tend to see better innovation outcomes. Employees' perceptions of this climate influence how creative solutions are promoted and executed (Burpitt & Bigoness, 1997). Yet, most studies have focused on analytical and manufacturing sectors, with insufficient attention given to broader organizational dynamics (Hazman, Razmi & Rahman, 2006). Jain (2010) emphasizes the need for more research on organizational climate's role in innovation, particularly in developing countries. Social capital has also been identified as a critical driver of innovation. Studies, such as Hamzah and Isa (2010), reveal that social capital is crucial for enhancing intellectual capital and innovation among engineers. However, limited research in China has explored the role of social capital in fostering innovation, especially in the textile industry. Given the current gap in empirical studies linking organizational determinants with innovative work behavior, this research seeks to examine how social capital, cognitive style, and organizational climate influence innovation within China's textile industry. There remains a need for a more comprehensive understanding of these relationships to support innovation effectively.

V. Conclusion

Innovative Work Behavior is a multi-faceted, dynamic process that plays a vital role in organizational innovation. Knowledge workers contribute significantly at each stage of innovation – from identifying opportunities to generating ideas and implementing solutions. Their ability to innovate continually and collaborate effectively with others drives incremental improvements and ensures that organizations remain responsive to evolving customer needs. This study highlights the importance of understanding the various dimensions of IWB and the role of knowledge workers in fostering a culture of innovation within organizations.

The dynamic interaction between Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Social Capital (SC), Cognitive Style (CS), and Organizational Climate (OC) plays a crucial role in fostering Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) within knowledgeintensive organizations. High-quality LMX relationships cultivate trust, emotional support, and professional growth, empowering employees to embrace creativity and reduce perceived risks. Similarly, strong social capital facilitates knowledge exchange, collaboration, and motivation, which are vital for driving innovation. Cognitive style influences decision-making and problem-solving approaches, with intuitive thinking contributing to idea generation, while analytical thinking supports execution. A supportive organizational climate, characterized by autonomy, open communication, and risk-taking, further enhances creativity by creating a safe space for innovation to thrive.

However, significant literature gaps remain, particularly in developing countries like China, where research on the impact of organizational factors on IWB in sectors such as textiles is limited. While previous studies emphasize the importance of leadership, social capital, and cognitive style in innovation, there is a need for more empirical research in these contexts. Understanding these relationships within specific industry sectors, such as China's textile industry, will provide valuable insights into how organizational dynamics can be leveraged to foster innovation effectively. Bridging these gaps will help organizations in developing countries enhance their innovation capacities, contributing to their economic growth and competitiveness on a global scale.

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