

ANALYSING EMPLOYEE INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY AMONG TEACHING FACULTY IN KUMBAKONAM TOWN

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Abstract:

To capture the minds of the new millennium kids and to train them with life skills, it takes a lot of challenging tasks to keep the students in rapt attentions by the teachers. The need of the hour is to juggle out new and creative teaching techniques to impart knowledge and life skills to the students. This study focuses on helping the academicians of Kumbakonam town to identify their innate skills and associate it in the teaching pedagogy.

Keywords: creativity, skill, knowledge, Innovation

Introduction

The role of innovation in enhancing organizational productivity and effectiveness, increasingly important amidst the pressures of growing global competition and economic uncertainty, is widely acknowledged. Innovative thinking that responds to user demands and materializes in favorable outcomes will enhance an organization's long-term prosperity. Employees, both as individuals, team members and active members of communities of practice, contribute significantly to an organization's success in innovative practices. Indeed, individual contribution to an organization's innovative processes is vital and a significant precursor for career progression and management success.

Statement of Problem

Much of the research on individual innovation focuses on specific factors that are considered to support and compound individual performance in the area of team membership, organizational support or societal characteristics. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the factors influencing academicians of Kumbakonam town's innovation, drawing together these factors to build a model and checklist of the components necessary for individuals to achieve innovative practice. In doing this, we examine both the individual's characteristics and how individuals interact with an organization's innovation processes. The research question for this

review can be expressed simply as 'Is the creativity skill of the individual is associated to their qualification'?

Review of Literature

Definitions of the construct of 'innovation'

All members of an organization must have an understanding of innovation that is incorporated into the corporate vision. A working definition impinges on recruitment and performance management decisions and how innovative practices are supported financially. Some similarities, but also striking differences, emerged in how innovation is defined in the literature. There appears to be a strong tendency to differentiate between creativity – broadly considered the generation of ideas – and application which focuses on the ability to implement a new idea/product/service or applying an existing idea/product/service in a novel way.

Only one of the reviewed articles substitutes 'creativities' for innovation where creativity is defined as "the production of novel ideas that are useful and appropriate to the situation". Some authors focus on individual creativity as a precursor for innovation; creativity forming a significant focus for many studies on innovation extends the exploration of idea generation to individuals within a group setting. At an organizational level creativity is triggered by the perceived need for change.

Theoretical Perspectives of Innovation:

Six influential theoretical perspectives and models can be discerned across the creativity and innovation literatures.

Componential Theory of Organizational Creativity and Innovation

The most important premise of this theory is that work environments impact creativity by affecting components that contribute to creativity which represent a basic source for organizational innovation (Amabile, 1997). There are three major components contributing to individual or small team creativity: expertise, creative-thinking skill, and intrinsic motivation. In contrast, the main components of the wider work environment that influence employee creativity are organizational motivation to innovate, resources (including finances, time availability, and personnel resources), and managerial practices, such as enabling challenging work and supervisory encouragement (Amabile, 1997; Amabile & Conti, 1999). This model has received some empirical support in terms of the role of its motivation component as a psychological mechanism underlying influences from the work environment on employees' creativity, though the other components have not received as much research attention as the motivation component (Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham 2004; Zhou & Shalley, 2010).

Interactionist Perspective of Organizational Creativity

The interactionist perspective of organizational creativity (Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993) stresses that creativity is a complex interaction between the individual and their work situation at different levels of organization. At the individual level, individual creativity is the result of antecedent conditions (e.g., biographical variables), cognitive style and ability (e.g., divergent thinking), personality (e.g., self-esteem), relevant knowledge, motivation, social influences (e.g., rewards), and contextual influences (e.g., physical environment). At the team level, creativity is a consequence of individual creative behavior, the interaction between the group members (e.g., group composition), group characteristics (e.g., norms, size), team processes, and contextual influences (e.g., organizational culture, reward systems).

Research Design

Sampling techniques: Simple random sampling was used to collect data using a well-structured questionnaire and Statistical tool used: Frequency distribution, Chi-square test.

Table 5.1: Qualification of the Respondents

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1	Under Graduate	0	0
2	Post Graduate	0	0
3	Master in Philosophy	42	54
4	Doctor of Philosophy	26	33
5	SET/ NET	10	13
	Total	78	100

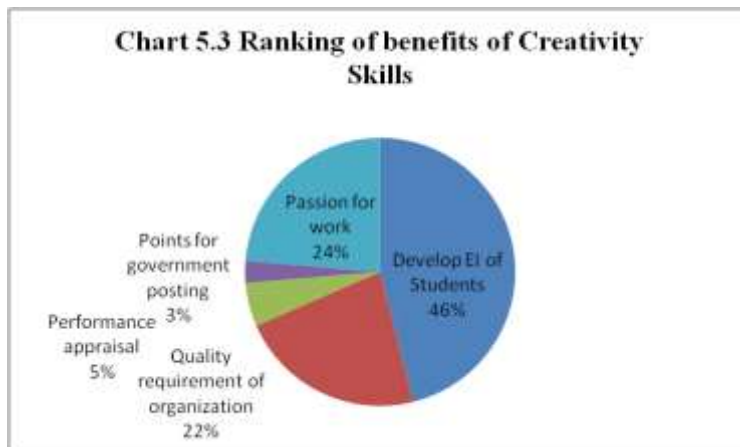
It is clear from the above table that 54% of the respondents have a Master in Philosophy, 13% of the respondents have a doctoral degree, and 13% of the respondents have qualified the National Eligibility test or State Eligibility Test. Creativity and innovation are found among the faculty members who have done Masters in Philosophy. They exhibit more creative tasks in their academic profession. Today it is the need of the hour to be different in order to engage the students in the class room. Of course, those who have done Doctorate are also found to be making difference in their teaching. Thus, the study reveals that creativity and innovation are necessary to be more effective in teaching.

Table 5.2 Influencers of Creativity Skills

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1	Analytical Skills	35	45
2	Organizing Skills	13	17
3	Mentoring Skills	7	9
4	Problem Solving Skills	13	17
5	Communication Skills	9	12
6	Artistic Skills	1	1
	Total	78	100

The above table concludes that dominating skills of 35% of the respondents is analytical skills, followed by 13% each of organizing and problem-solving skills, 9% of communication skills, 7% of mentoring skills and 1% of artistic skills. The study suggests that analytical skills is much appreciated than the other skills. Therefore, the other skills must be focused for developing professors to train the students to face the world in future as it demands more problem-solving skills.

Table 5.3 - Ranking of benefits the respondents wish to obtain by practicing creativity and innovation at work place



From table, it is clear that 46% of respondents practice creative skills so as to develop the emotional intelligence of the students, 24% practice it to fulfil their passion for teaching, 22% practice it as it is the quality requirement of the organization, 5% practice is for performing better in appraisal and 3% focus it for scoring points for government posting.

Statistical Analysis- Association between qualification and creativity skills

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no association between **qualification** and creativity skills.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): There is association between **qualification** and creativity skills.

Table- 5.4 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.021 ^a	5	.413
Likelihood Ratio	6.764	5	.239
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.959	1	.085
N of Valid Cases	78		

a. 7 cells (58.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

INFERENCE

Calculated value = 0.413

Degree of freedom = 0.05

RESULT

Since the table value at 5% level of significance is 0.413

As, calculated value > tabulated value, null hypothesis is accepted.

Hence, there is no association between qualification and creativity skills.

Suggestions

The institution can maximize academicians' performance if they are able to identify the skill of the individual, hence it was suggested that interview schedule should include assessment test so as to identify the individual's skills. With fast changing trends, the teachers have to continuously create new methods of teaching to motivate the students to develop strong emotional intelligence.

Conclusions

The role of individuals is critical in organizational innovation. This paper has analyzed the creativity and innovative practices of academicians, so as to identify the areas and issues that impact on an individual's innovative capacity. Despite the wealth of literature on innovation in general further research is needed to identify just how and where individuals can be encouraged and developed to reach their innovative potential. This paper proposes a roadmap for theoretical developments in the area that highlights the complexity of and challenges associated with leveraging an academician's innovative potential within institutional structures.

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