

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES AND INNOVATION TYPES: A MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** This research aims at demonstrating how employee attitudes effect on innovation types that they adopt. Furthermore, this study examines the effects of most frequently used and widely accepted twelve constructs on workplace-related employee attitudes on three types of innovation. Results mainly reveal that based on the data gathered as a self-reported survey over a hundred employees from the manufacturing industry in Turkey, only half-dozen of the attitudes differently connected with the three types of innovation. Concretely, incremental and imitation types of innovation have significant relations with employees' organizational related attitudes, and radical innovation has significant relations both with the job-related and organizational-related employee attitudes. The study sheds a light for innovation researchers and practitioners to make them consider which of the workplace related attitude of employees has a significant connection with which of the innovation type.

**Keywords:** Innovation types, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, employee attitudes

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### Introduction

Innovation is the core competitive advantage, and it is vitally essential for organizations to stay competitive in a dynamic and hostile environment, however, a concerted link between the employee attitudes and innovation types is under-researched. Therefore, this study aims to research the prominent connections among the employees' workplace related attitudes with three types of innovation. A significant number of studies emphasize the importance of human capital on innovation (López-Pueyo et al., 2018; Nieves and Quintana, 2018; Hitt et al., 2001), surprisingly the empirical investigation on how the human factor that is connected with the innovation types in work settings is still a literature gap. Therefore, this study aims at testing the relations empirically among twelve work-related attitudes and three types of innovation.

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An idea for a successful innovation comes out from a human mind and in this sense; committed members are the core resources of successful organizations to remain innovative as the resource-based theory suggests (Barney, 1991). While attempting to manage the resource dependencies along with constraints in the organizations and to understand the effects of the internal psychological factors of employees, our comprehensive study aims to explore the relations between three types of innovation and twelve types of work-related employee attitudes towards both their jobs and their organizations. While, the organizational boundaries, oppositions to change, or psychological factors drive the employees' work motivation for championing an idea for innovation in forms of radical, incremental (Gatignon and Xuereb, 1997) or imitative (Zhou, 2006; Pachura, 2012; Taha et al., 2016), this study therefore employs three types of innovation that are radical, incremental and imitative.

### **Literature Review**

#### Resource Dependence Theory & Social Information Processing Theory

Resource dependence theory (RDT) is one of the most influential theories in management studies that characterizes the corporation as an open system, and dependent on contingencies in the external environment (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003). As a quote from Pfeffer and Salancik (1978, p.1), *"to understand the behavior of an organization you must understand the context of that behavior - that is, the ecology of the organization"*. As to social information processing theory (SIP), there are three fundamental issues. First, social context matters; second, organizations have strategies to enhance their autonomy and pursue their interests; and the third power is essential for understanding internal and external actions of organizations (Davis and Cobb, 2010). Considering the resource dependence theory along with the social information theory, the identification of the connections between the innovative efforts and the employees' work attitudes is a hallmark topic for both researchers and practitioners.

SIP has the idea that employee attitudes are determined by social cues processed from the work environment. The theory, wherein job satisfaction is influenced by the available information to staff members. Social information processing happens when a staff member hears the evaluative statements or judgements from the colleagues about his or her job, and feels inclined to agree with them in order to fit in (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978). Employees who have a high frequency of intra-organizational communication with their either peers or superiors perceive that working together on the tasks with the coworkers regress and reform their work-related attitudes mostly on positive outcomes (Meyer and Bartels, 2017).

According to SIP, individuals at work form their judgments towards the job and organization slowly. The stimuli from the social environment and cues within the organization shape or modify the attitudes and the expectations of individuals, especially towards the task characteristics (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978). SIP theory becomes a strong skeleton to study employee behaviors towards the working

context (Priesemuth et al., 2014), and characteristics of job satisfaction (Griffin, 1983). As a result, this study covers twelve distinct employee attitudes and examines *ceteris-paribus* connections with three types of innovation, furthermore, regressing the job and organizational related upper theoretical constructs on innovation types, reveals that which employee attitudes are the set of antecedents for a desired innovation type.

#### Types of Innovation and Innovation Processes

Oslo Manual categorizes the degrees of novelty in two categories; the novelty is either new or significantly improved to the firm (OECD-EUROSTAT, 2005). Damanpour and Wischnevsky (2006) also distinguish the novelty degree of innovation at two levels, radical and incremental. Accordingly, while radical innovation requires long-term investment and complex efforts, the efforts for achieving an incremental innovation require mid-term investment and need relatively simple processes. The empirical evidence from China extends that evaluation of product development is on a continuum, on which the one edge represents the radical innovation to a more distant degree namely, the pure imitation (Zhou, 2006).

For effective external adaptation and internal integration of the novelty within an organization, organizations need to adopt radical ideas to gain and sustain a competitive advantage for the long-term. In contrary only for keeping the competitive position that is mostly possible in short-terms, organizations try either to fulfill the current demands of their customers quickly or to catch the ongoing market trends (Tushman and O'Reilly, 2002). The radical refers to the new, incremental refers to the significantly improved, and imitation refers to "*me, too*" innovations in forms of products, processes, marketing techniques or organizations. Although vast number of definitions or typologies on the types of innovation and innovativeness exist in the literature (Garcia and Calontone, 2002), the study presumes a type of innovation is different from an implementation field of such as a product innovation or a process innovation for the strategic decisions, considers the impact degree of innovation processes.

As a result, this study considers the types of innovation in three categories according to their expected effect levels in markets. Radical innovation refers to the overall organizational tendency for implementing new products, new processes, new organizational methods or new marketing techniques. Incremental refers to organizational-wide efforts on significantly improving the products, processes, organization methods or marketing techniques. Imitative innovation is different from the fake production and it refers to the similar applications of the successful products, processes, organizational methods or marketing techniques within the organization mostly for other market segments. The literature presents empirical evidence on measuring the types of innovation (Zhou, 2006), organizational factors that predict the innovation types, and performance indicators of innovation types (Forés and Camisón, 2016). However, any empirical connection or prediction of a

desired innovation type with the employees' work-related attitudes is yet a literature gap.

#### Workplace-Related Attitudes

Organizations in competitive markets make the difference over others with qualified employees and their potential contributions to their business (van den Broek et al., 2018). Organizations, therefore, apply human resource practices to increase the job satisfaction of their employees, in turn, the employees with higher degrees of job satisfaction contribute to their workplaces (Bowling et al., 2015; Huselid, 1995). Job satisfaction refers to the degree of satisfaction felt with the tasks and the work practices (Bateman and Organ, 1983). Considering the factors related both with the job and the organization is important to better examine the attitudes of individuals at workplaces, therefore the employee attitudes towards their work and workplace that emerge within the organizational climate are together important (Priesemuth et al., 2014).

Job satisfaction balances the threshold between job qualities and employee expectations, resulting in a certain degree of saturation (Currivan, 1999). It contains the employees' attitudes towards their wage, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits and/or additional income, rewards, working conditions and rules, work colleagues, work itself and intra-organizational communication, which are the most prevalent events (Spector, 1997). The empirical study of Huang et al. (2016) on high-performance work systems and employee attitudes, specifically job involvement in three major industrial categories of manufacturing, finance, and service in Taiwan, identifies that organizations provide an innovative working atmosphere to improve employee attitudes and their involvement to their tasks and jobs. Therefore, job involvement is an important predictor of both the task performance and the organizational performance.

Job involvement refers to the degree of individuals' involvement in their work-related tasks (Kanungo, 1982). The employees who are enthusiastic about their task objectives have energetic and effective connections with their jobs (Gracia et al., 2013; Bakker et al., 2008). The employees, who are involved at work to their tasks and try to fulfill their organizational roles in positive emotions, also apt try to contribute to the achievement of organizational success (Meneghel et al., 2016). The employees who intend to remain in their organization show higher performance with organizational citizenship behaviors (Singh and Gupta, 2015), and the employees are more involved with the job, lessen the turnover intention (Yu and Lee, 2018; Jabeen et al., 2018).

The literature often presents strong correlations between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, however, while one may not be a predictor of extra role behaviors, the other may remain a good predictor (Williams and Anderson, 1991). Organizational commitment refers to the degree of attachment and intention to remain in an organization of individuals where they are employed (Kim et al., 2016). There are three components of organizational commitment, which are affective, normative and continuance commitment (Meyer et al., 1993).

As a result, based upon the aforementioned gap of the literature and our discussions about the lack of evidence on the significant connections of employees' attitudes towards the work and workplace, we developed the following hypotheses to reveal the associations of twelve employee attitudes on three types of innovations.

*H1: The higher the development of work-related attitudes, the higher the efforts for incremental innovation*

*H2: The higher the development of work-related attitudes, the higher the efforts for radical innovation.*

*H3: The higher the development of work-related attitudes, the higher the efforts for imitative innovation.*

## **Method**

### Sample and scales

A self-reported face to face survey with one hundred employees from the manufacturing industry in Izmir from March 2018 to August 2018 takes place in this research and the convenience sampling applied for this research. The survey consists of two sections. The first section consists of demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, work experience in the organization, and department. The second section has items regarding organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, and innovation types (incremental, radical, and imitation). All scale items are in Likert scale (1- indicates *Strongly Disagree* and 5- indicates *Strongly Agree*). It requires that while responding the questions, the respondents base their responses on where they work.

The scales of this study are adapted from the following resources; *Organizational Commitment* (Meyer et al., 1993) consists of 18 items as affective commitment - six, continuance commitment - six, and normative commitment - six items. Moreover, *Job Involvement* (Kanungo, 1982) consists of ten items, and *Job Satisfaction* (Spector, 1997) consists of 36 items in which there are (wage - four items, promotion - four, supervision - four, fringe benefits and/or any additional income - four, rewards - four, operating procedures - four, coworkers - four, the nature of work - four, and in-company communication - four items). As an *Innovation Type*, 17 items are collected and adapted from Gatignon and Xuereb, (1997) and Zhou (2006) as radical innovation - six, incremental innovation - six, and imitation - five items.

Cronbach alpha values are used to determine the reliability and internal consistency of the variables. Cronbach alpha values are calculated above 0.70 except promotion, show the internal consistency of the statements. Affective commitment ( $\alpha$ : 0.80), Continuance commitment ( $\alpha$ : 0.78), Normative commitment ( $\alpha$ : 0.70). Job involvement ( $\alpha$ : 0.78), Job satisfaction (pay  $\alpha$ : 0.72, promotion  $\alpha$ : 0.62, supervision  $\alpha$ : 0.79, fringe benefits  $\alpha$ : 0.83, rewards  $\alpha$ : 0.78, coworkers  $\alpha$ : 0.70, nature of work  $\alpha$ : 0.74, and communication  $\alpha$ : 0.73). Incremental character ( $\alpha$ : 0.79), radical character ( $\alpha$ : 0.78), and imitation character ( $\alpha$ : 0.71).

### Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents the demographic features of the respondents such as; gender, age group, education background, the department the respondents work, and their work experience in business life.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics**

<i>Gender</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	52
Male	48
<i>Age Group</i>	<i>100</i>
25 and below	15
26-40	83
41-55 years old	2
<i>Education Background</i>	<i>100</i>
Vocational school graduate	19
Associate degree	26
Undergraduate degree	55
<i>Department the respondents work</i>	<i>100</i>
Operations & Manufacturing (Blue Collars)	44
Sales and Marketing	17
Operations & Management (White Collars)	39
<i>Work Experience</i>	<i>100</i>
0-1 year	15
2-10	83
11-20 years	2

## Multivariate Data Analyses

### Factor Analyses

We submit each of the theoretical construct to principal component analysis (PCA) with the statistical program SPSS. Factor analysis resulted in a good level of adequacy. The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value of organizational commitment is 0.685, 0.641 for job satisfaction, and 0.705 for innovation character, and significance level <0.00 for Bartlett's test of sphericity, indicate that the data is suitable for the analysis. Independent variables-Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction- are handled one by one in terms of diffusion of novelty. According to first-factor analysis results, three factors for organizational commitment with Total Explained Variance equal to 61.72 %, eight factors for job satisfaction with Total Explained Variance equal to 70.12 %, and three factors for innovation character with Total Explained Variance equal to 73.14 %, yielded result as expected. The eigenvalue is determined at 1 as to the varimax rotation. Based on the PCA results, the components and number of the items that are included in the survey are demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2. The Components and number of Items based on the PCA Results**

Dimension	Component	Number of Items	Total Explained Variance
Organizational Commitment	Affective Commitment	6	61.72 %
	Continuance Commitment	6	
	Normative Commitment	6	
Job Satisfaction	Rewards, Operating Procedures	8	70.12 %
	Supervision	4	
	Pay	4	
	Nature of work	4	
	Communication	4	
	Benefits	4	
	Co-workers	4	
	Promotion	4	
Innovation Character	Incremental	6	73.14 %
	Radical	6	
	Imitation	5	

#### Multiple Regression Analyses

We have conducted three multiple regression analyses to explore the joint effects of workplace related employee attitudes on each of the innovation types. The findings of the regression analysis on the effects of workplace related employee attitudes on incremental innovation is significant by producing F value of 6.001, as in Table 3. Considering the joint effects of the employee attitudes, only organizational commitment has positive and significant effect ( $\beta$ : .395;  $p < .05$ ) on incremental type of innovation, as consistent with the findings of correlation analysis.

**Table 3. The effects of employee attitudes on the incremental innovation**

Variable	Beta	t	p
1. Organizational Commitment	.395	3.981	.000
2. Job Involvement	-.079	-.701	.485
3. Job Satisfaction	.132	1.236	.219

Note:  $R^2 = 0.158$ ;  $F = 6.001$ ;  $p = 0.001$

In Table 4, the regression model is significant with an F value of 3.017. Among the three upper-factors of employees' workplace related attitudes, job involvement marginally affects the radical innovation ( $\beta$ : .224;  $p = .059$ ).

**Table 4. The effects of employee attitudes on the radical innovation**

Variable	Beta	t	p
1. Organizational Commitment	.163	1.580	.117
2. Job Involvement	.224	1.910	.059
3. Job Satisfaction	-.119	-1.071	.287

Note:  $R^2 = 0.086$ ;  $F = 3.017$ ;  $p = 0.034$

In Table 5, the regression model is significant with an F value of 2.824. Organizational commitment marginally significant effects on imitation character with  $\beta$ : .201 and  $p=.56$ .

**Table 5. The effects of employee attitudes on the work attitudes**

Variable	Beta	t	p
1. Organizational Commitment	.201	1.933	<b>.056</b>
2. Job Involvement	.168	1.429	.156
3. Job Satisfaction	-.084	-.747	.457

Note: R<sup>2</sup>= 0.081; F= 2.824; p= 0.043

### Results

Based on the results of multiple regression analysis, we present Table 6 to depict the summary of ceteris paribus separate connections of the employee attitudes with the three types of innovation. The results show that all hypotheses are accepted. Accordingly, three of the organizational-related attitudes and three of the job-related attitudes have prominent connections with different innovation types. Among the twelve employee attitudes, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and perceived communication have connections with the incremental innovation. Affective commitment also significantly correlate with imitative innovation. Normative commitment, job involvement, and perceived nature of the work dimensions have significant one-to-one relations with the radical innovation. The research of Cruz et al. (2018) demonstrates that organizational commitment is a critical dimension to provide an innovative environment in a workplace because it contributes to organizational survival for a business since innovation and commitment are constructs that helps creating a successful competition amongst companies. Our research extends this understanding by considering different types of commitment and innovation.

**Table 6. Workplace-related attitudes and their connection with innovation types**

Workplace Related Attitudes		Imitative Innovation	Incremental Innovation	Radical Innovation
<b>Organization-Related Attitudes</b>	Affective Commitment	✓	✓	
	Continuance Commitment		✓	
	Normative Commitment			✓
<b>Job-Related Attitudes</b>	Job Involvement			✓
	Nature of Work			✓
	Communication		✓	



With the multiple regression analyses, we developed three models to test the joint effects of employee attitudes' upper factor structures on an innovation type separately. We modeled the employee attitudes as the independent factors, which are "organizational commitment", "job involvement", and "job satisfaction". Surprisingly, job satisfaction remains insignificant when employees commit their organization and involve to their jobs. In other words when we consider the effects of three dependent variables together on an innovation type, although the effect of job satisfaction on a type of innovation turned insignificant for each time, either "organizational commitment" or "job involvement" remained as an antecedent of an innovation type. Although we examined the upper combined structures of the effects of organizational commitment and job satisfaction on innovation types, we think that the results of the individual components of employee attitudes presumably provide more specific and significant information for the practitioners. Therefore, separately interpreting the employee attitudes may serve leaders to direct their agents towards achieving the coveted type of innovations.

### **Conclusion**

The study explores the prominent connections among a dozen number of work-related attitudes and a quarter dozen number of innovation types. Besides the three constructs on the types of innovation, this study picks up the most frequently used and widely accepted twelve constructs of workplace-related employee attitudes among the immense number of empirical studies, and first examines their one-to-one connections with three different types of innovation, latter tests the joint effects of employee attitudes on an innovation type.

Findings reveal that based on the data collected as a self-reported survey over a hundred employees from the manufacturing sector, only half-dozen of the employee attitudes have significant connections with the three types of innovation. Concretely, incremental and imitation types of innovation present significant *ceteris-paribus* relation with employees' organizational-related attitudes; radical innovation has significant relations with the job-related and organizational-related employee attitudes.

Considering the effects of personal well-being at work and willingness to work toward the attainment of organizational purposes is important. It is critical to comprehend that incremental innovation has a significant and positive connection with affective and continuous organizational commitment. Radical innovation has significant relations with job involvement, satisfaction from the nature of work, and normative commitment. Imitative innovation comes out from the ones who are emotionally committed to their organizations.

From the organization standpoint, it is significant to associate the work-related attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement on innovation performance. What the researchers should consider is that which of the work-related attitude of the employees has the significant relationship with which of the innovation type.

Managers may pay attention to which work-related attitudes to boost in order to increase the tendency towards which type of innovation whether it is radical, incremental or imitative. Therefore, the leaders of the organizations may improve the complex organizational structures of today's business world. By this perspective, the managers may interpret, correct, and direct their employees' attitudes towards the organizational objectives according to the planned innovation type, in terms of either imitative, incremental or radical.

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#### RELACJA MIĘDZY POSTAWAMI PRACOWNIKA A RODZAJAMI INNOWACJI: Z PERSPEKTYWY ZARZĄDZANIA

**Streszczenie:** Celem tego badania jest pokazanie, w jaki sposób postawy pracowników wpływają na typy innowacji, które przyjmują. Ponadto w niniejszym badaniu przeanalizowano wpływ najczęściej używanych i powszechnie akceptowanych dwunastu konstrukcji na stosunek pracowników do miejsca pracy w odniesieniu do trzech rodzajów innowacji. Wyniki pokazują przede wszystkim, że na podstawie danych zebranych jako samodzielna ankieta ponad stu pracowników z przemysłu wytwórczego w Turcji, zaledwie pół tuzina postaw różnie związanych z trzema rodzajami innowacji. Konkretnie, przyrostowe i naśladowe typy innowacji mają znaczące powiązania z postawami organizacyjnymi związanymi z pracownikami, a radykalna innowacja ma istotne relacje zarówno z postawami pracowniczymi związanymi z pracą, jak i organizacyjnymi. Badanie rzuca światło badaczom i praktykom zajmującym się innowacjami, aby skłonić ich do zastanowienia się, która z postaw związanych z miejscem pracy ma istotny związek z typem innowacji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** typy innowacji, zadowolenie z pracy, zaangażowanie organizacyjne, zaangażowanie w pracę, postawy pracowników

#### 员工态度与创新类型的关系：一个管理者的视角

**摘要：**本研究旨在展示员工态度如何影响他们采用的创新类型。此外，本研究还考察了最常用和被广泛接受的 12 种结构对工作场所相关员工对三种创新的态度影响。结果主要表明，根据收集的数据，作为一项自我报告的调查，来自土耳其制造业的一百多名员工，只有六种态度与三种类型的创新不同。具体而言，增量和模仿类型的创新与员工的组织相关态度有显著关系，激进创新与工作相关和组织相关的员工态度有显著关系。该研究为创新研究人员和从业人员提供了一个亮点，使他们能够考虑员工的工作场所相关态度与哪种创新类型有显著联系。

**关键词：**创新类型，工作满意度，组织承诺，工作投入，员工态度