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Organizational Climate for Creativity

Exploring the Influence of Distinct Types of Individual Differences

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First, some context of this book:

Christian Hoßbach works as a Postdoctoral Researcher and coordinator of M.Sc. Program in Human Resources Management @ Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. This book shows his doctorate thesis (BestMasters publishes master theses of renowned universities in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland from various research fields that received the highest marks and were recommended for publication by their supervisors). His study has been supported by the Creative Problem Solving Group-Buffalo (CPSB)

His thesis's research question explores the influence of distinct individual differences (gender, age, problem-solving style, life phase, and creative self-efficacy) on the perception of organizational climate for creativity by a quantitative and qualitative approach (multimethod research). He focused on organizational climate as this is more amenable to change than organizational culture. This thesis aims to shed some light on the type of climate that supports or inhibits the individual creative potential of different people.

The theoretical foundations of this research:

Based on the climate-centric Model for Organizational Creativity (Isaksen, 2013). This model has been researched most regarding the subject of organizational creativity, and ample evidence supports climate as an intervening variable. Factors in the workplace environment determine the climate, which impacts psychological and organizational processes and, subsequently, organizational outcomes such as creative performance and well-being. This model makes a clear distinction between antecedents, climate, and outcomes. The influence of individual differences in this thesis on the perception of the organizational climate for creativity is also based on the theoretical concept of Person-Environment fit (PE-fit) (Van Vianen, 2018).



Methods:

The independent variables were the individual differences (measured by the VIEW for problem-solving styles (Selby, 2004), age, life phase LP, and creative self-efficacy CSE), and the dependent variables were creative climate dimensions (measured by the Situational Outlook Questionnaire SOQ, a multimethod tool). Bot measures have been chosen because they are most used in their fields and are validated and improved continuously by using empirical support for development. The SOQ was performed twice for the best and worst situations of the creative climate the participants experienced at their workplaces. Problem-solving style was measured by looking at three style dimensions: Orientation to change (OC), Manner of Processing (MP), and Ways of Deciding (WD). OC was subdivided into three subscales: novelty (NV), SA structure and authority (SA), and search strategy (SS). The different styles had different orientations depending on the scores: OC: explorer-developer, MP: external-internal, WD: person-task.

Participants: sample size 123

Who was invited to participate? Six hundred thirty-four clients of the Creative problem-solving group Buffalo. Other people were invited to increase diversity and sample size: HRM, engineers, and consultants from Austria and Germany who were clients of a German consultancy firm. Norwegian graduates with creativity courses and dual-track MBA Germany alums were invited to increase age diversity. All participants had to have some years of work experience.

Results:

There was a lot of missing data for LP and CSE, which led to the exclusion of these data. The data were comparable to the general population data of the used tests. The data (primarily qualitative) showed most relationships in OC dimensions regarding the perception of best-case climate and the difference between best and worst-case creative climate. The qualitative data showed that explorers and developers mean different things with autonomy. Explorers preferred supervisors at a distance. Developers wanted structure and boundaries. Explorers preferred team collaboration; developers preferred a more internal working style.

Women were more concerned about relationships. Support and trust were needed for a best-case situation. Men were more concerned about challenges and tasks such as time resources. The level of engagement was more important for men.

Concluding:

This study shows that problem-solving style and gender influence how people perceive the work environment in which they feel most and least creative.

My key points and issues:

Inspiring study on the relationship between individual factors and perceptions of creative climate. It started me thinking about the workplace with different unique characteristics. It will be different in different places. Measurement is essential to put every employee in their vital areas so they can perform maximally. So, knowing each other's factors by testing and sharing is necessary. This hot book helped me with my big question (How can we change the climate for creativity in our Intensive Care Unit)? I will have to evaluate the climate for creativity with the SOQ and look at the individual factors with the VIEW. Sharing the results with the team (including the supervisor) will hypothetically help the creative performance and employee well-being.

•The SOQ (Isaksen, 2023) and the VIEW are reliable, validated, and continuously improved by empirical data. I think, at the moment, the best measures to use regarding assessing the climate for creativity and individual problem-solving styles.

·People with different individual problem-solving styles need further guidance from their supervisors. Explorers need more advice at a distance. Developers need more structured boundaries and time to work individually.

·Persons with different problem-solving styles will like other tools to work with, like brainstorming for explorers and brainwriting more for developers. When facilitating, you have to take this into account.

It would be better to have a more significant sample, a more balanced sample size (regarding age), and more complete data (LP, CSE) to increase reliability. Considering my big question, I could incorporate Adult Intensive Care Unit personnel from all the Netherlands ICUs using the NVIC (Dutch Society of Intensive Care) network. When acquiring participants, I will make a visually attractive folder. Also, adding meaning by applying Feiler's ABC (agency, belonging, and a higher cause) can help increase participants with different meaning preferences (Feiler, 2021).

•The terms climate for organizational creativity and creative organizational climate are both used. I would suggest using Climate for organizational creativity.

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