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**IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST ON PROCESS INNOVATION
THROUGH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE CREATION
PRACTICES**

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Keywords: Organizational trust, Knowledge creation practices, Process innovation.

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine an impact of organizational trust on innovation through the mediating role of knowledge creation practices. Data was collected from 290 Sapphire Textiles' employees and further analyzed using simple linear regression and multiple regression analysis. The results confirm that organizational trust is positively related to process innovation via knowledge creation practices. This research advances our understanding of the process of organizational trust implications associated with organizational trust. The study also incorporates the following rationales for better managing the process innovation by the organizations for e.g. firstly overall relationship of organizational trust, knowledge creation practices and process innovation in a single model. The key limitation of this research was the cross-sectional. HRM researchers should seek to replicate and expand the results with multi-wave data to extend our understanding of the implications of organizational trust..

Introduction

This research was to examine an impact of organizational trust on innovation through the mediating role of knowledge creation practices.

Process innovation is our variable of interest. Innovation required big heart to take the risk. To get better results, it is necessary to improve the rate of success by applying useful techniques. To make the operations effective and efficient process innovation plays an important role like to create, modify or extend the internal, administrative and technological procedural improvements (Damanpour et al., 2009; Heij et al., 2020). The innovation process is an ongoing procedure to start with an idea till the final product or service becomes operational (Jaruzelski et al., 2018). To achieve the procedural efficiency, it is necessary to improve the whole managerial and operational process (Li et al., 2017).

Process innovation could be defines as “a systematic improvement for modification, creation and expansion of administrative and operational processes of an organization”. In the whole world, Pakistan is at number 4 in top cotton producing countries (Malik & Ihsan, 2016). Annually Pakistan is generating about 60-65% foreign exchange from cotton, which is about \$5.5 billion. It is the back bone of “Pakistan’s economy which provides employment to more than 40% in total industrial labour; its contribution in GDP is 8.5% and accounts for 40% of banks credit and its share in total national exports are 60%, but it doesn’t represent the full potentials of Pakistan textile industry, if Pakistan manages it properly and takes some remedial steps it can substantially increase its market share in the world” (Ahmad & Siddiqui, 2016; Ali et al., 2020). Pakistan is among the top list of world to produce textile goods (Ali et al., 2020). Textile goods hold about 46% portion of the whole manufacturing market and also able to provide employment about 38% among industrial labour (Ali et al., 2020).

Minimized labour cost and easily availability of cotton (raw) signifies the best growth of Pakistan textiles (Ali et al., 2020). About 8.5% contribution in total GDP belongs to textiles in Pakistan. Pakistan is the 8th largest textile exporter among the Asian countries (Shah, 2015). The production of “textile sector consists of cotton ginning, cotton fabrics, fabric processing, home textiles, towels, hosiery, net wares and ready-made garments, such all goods are produced at large scale in formal and informal textile sector” (Awan & Anwar, 2019). It is the most important industrial sector particular in Pakistan (Ali et al., 2020). Pakistan is enables to produce about 8% of the whole world market that’s why Pakistan stands at number 4th in the world (Ahmad 2018). Pakistan has large scale organizations and SME’s units of cotton (LCCI, 2019). As per the World Bank (2019) in future it is expected that Pakistani economy will face a decline in the growth particularly in next 2 years. GDP growth stands at 3.4% during 2018-2019 and it is estimated drop down to 2.7% in 2020. The expected decline may occur due to strict monetary policies to handle the macroeconomic imbalance (Ali et al., 2020). Certain reforms in the structure may align the economic growth. By improving macroeconomic and making useful reforms in fiscal management will enable the economic growth jump up to 4% in the year 2021 (Ali et al., 2020). Low cost labour and on time availability of raw cotton are two major factors behind the development and growth of Pakistani textiles (Ahmad 2018). Pakistan is not doing well in value addition related to cotton products. The Pakistan’s “value added production is only \$1.17 billion per million bales while Bangladesh production is \$6 billion and India’s \$1.79 billion, the focus of Pakistan is on raw material exports, which can easily be converted to finish product and generate more revenues, the other cotton producing countries like China and India

have minimized exporting yarn, they use their local yarn in their value-added exports product, countries like South Korea and Japan do not produce cotton, they import yarn from other countries and then convert it to high-tech value-added products and sell it on high prices in international market” (Ali et al., 2020). According to Shah et al. (2014) production cost is being increased in Pakistan and it has negative impact on textile market. Iqbal, et al., (2017) said that Pakistani textile industry is still using obsolete and outdated production units and related machinery. Due to low intention to adopt latest technology and machinery in textile units, the industry is going down (Ali et al., 2020). Due to this mess, production cost is higher than other countries like Bangladesh, India and China (Ali et al., 2020). About 800 textile units are being closed now due to load shedding of electricity and gas particularly in Punjab, Pakistan and due to that about half million employees become unemployed (Ali et al., 2020). As per the report of Lahore chamber of commerce (development department) there is no proper certification and accreditation.

Before exporting any product, exporters are required to have sample approval from other countries in Pakistan (Ali et al., 2020). In Pakistan, there are also transportation issues (Khan & Bae, 2016). According to Rawalpindi chamber of commerce and industries, there is rapid increase in the prices of raw material because of inflation and due to that the production cost also increased (Ali et al., 2020). In Pakistan, supply chain management is not properly available and due to that delivery does not reach at the time and there is ultimately business loss (Iqbal, et al., 2017). Pakistani textile industry have some positive factors like low cost labour, adequate production of cotton and Government policies for modernization but still there are some issues remaining which are badly affecting the textiles market (Ali et al., 2020). Innovation process is the most important issue for any management of an organization and organizations do face multiple issues during the application of innovation process (Lendel et al., 2015; Al-Sa’di et al., 2017). Researchers like Lendel et al., (2015) and Al-Sa’di et al., (2017) has conducted a research, with the “primary goal to gather and interpret information about the level of use of innovation processes in Slovak organizations, that research interviewed 321 managers of small, medium and large enterprises, results indicate that most businesses (257 / 80.06%) generate innovative ideas to the identified customer requirements, however, a large number of businesses (186 / 57.96 %) do not take a proactive approach to generating innovative ideas and create them just in case there is a problem already, ideas are generated randomly according to 29 businesses (9.03 %) and they are not created at all in 19 businesses (5.92 %), innovative ideas are not being recorded by any information system in more than 61.28%, out of the 28.96% that do use information systems”. In Latin America, there is less productivity due to low innovation (Paus 2019). According to Zhang, et al., (2019) to survive for a longer period of time, it is required to adopt innovation particularly in diverse products and markets. In USA and European countries, there is a neck to neck competition to adopt innovation (Pfotenhauer et al., 2019).

Altaf et al., (2019), in Pakistan organizations are still behind to implement the innovation. Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan is facilitating and encouraging the study institutes to conduct studies to promote innovation among the organizations. Pakistan’s textile sector tends to be more “productive and innovative supposedly for export markets because such markets only buy products when local companies become globally compliant, research which was conducted on 125 Pakistani textile described that there still exist problems like lack of financing for textile firms when it comes to the need for process innovation in the country’s largest export sector” (Haq, 2019). “During my visits of sapphire textile, I had interacted with different officers and

employees of sapphire textile, in general discussion; I noticed that the employees of sapphire textile were not satisfied with the pace of process innovation in their head office & manufacturing units, they also informed me that their organization was much behind as compare to similar top companies of the world with regard to process innovation, this is main reason that we choose Sapphire textile for conducting the present research”. This study is based on a single case study design, so to conduct an analysis of a textile organization; it is a contextual condition (Kamau, 2014; Kiragu et al., 2019). Every research required many related case studies to increase the base of useful knowledge and enhance its deep and clear understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2007; Borsati & Albalade, 2019). To design the class of “best practices”, management related studies are always required to analyze the impact of relationships or strategies (Klonoski, 2013; Kurthakoti, & Good, 2019).

Organizational Trust

Lee et al, (2013), define organizational trust as the “expectations that individuals have about networks of organizational relationships and behaviors”. It can also be define as “employees’ collective perception regarding the trustworthiness of their organization” (Li, et al., 2012).

Organizational trust is emphasizing organizational characteristics that constitutes trust and ensure organization members act in (Kars & Inandi 2018). Organizational trust also involves the creation of a safe atmosphere where nobody is afraid of punishment and the members of the organization voluntarily make themselves vulnerable (Adams & Wiswell, 2008; Kars & Inandi 2018). In organizations where the feeling of trust is dominant, there is an open and participative environment, the members adopt their responsibilities and productivity is high, the culture of reconciliation is prevalent, and the inclination to work in groups and levels of taking part in decision making process increase (Teyfur et al., 2013; Kars & Inandi, 2018).

As per the trust is being considered at high risk and always is required more attention (Blendon, et al., 2014; Lee, et al 2019). Trust is the most important factor among any relation (Colquitt et al., 2007; Lewicki & Brinsfield, 2017; Kharouf, & Lund, 2018). According to Gibbons, Trust is the key factor for social life as well. It can be helpful for strong friendship relation among the individuals. Friendship and advice networks particularly in the scenario of changed professional ethics and values, which are helpful for effective negotiation and such bargaining type situation and also to minimize transactional expenses among the individuals to build a strong trust based relation it can also be supportive to sort out international level political issues and problems. According to (Molm, et al., 2007; Yu et al., 2018), trust is the core factor for impactful social life and procedures. It is the goal for every organization to build high trust among the employees, but still is facing issues to achieve the trust level among the organization (Yu et al., 2018).

Trust is the situation of confident positive thought about another’s thing related to an individual state of risk (Paliszkiewicz, 2019). Trust is the readiness of oneself as agreed to other’s behavior based on the perception that other person will accomplish a particular task as it is critical for trusting party without considering the capacity to control that other party (Mayer RC 1995; Paliszkiewicz, 2019). Trust is the way of believed that other one should believe as per our thought and interest (Paliszkiewicz, 2019). Trust is the perception of positive results that could be received in response to other’s performance and interaction characterized in an uncertain and different resulted variable (Paliszkiewicz, 2019).

Knowledge Creation Practices

Knowledge creation is defined as the process of continuously updating or increasing the knowledge base of what one knows now, rather than what one didn't he knew before, and keeping it accessible and usable (Tyagi et al., 2015). The basic difference between knowledge management and knowledge creation is that the former helps in filling the gaps to obtain raw data or information but the latter actually assists in problem solving (Tyagi et al., 2015).

Knowledge creation can help managers and researchers understand the conversion of large data into useful knowledge (Philip 2018). Knowledge creation is a learning process (Grimsdottir&Edvardsson, 2018). Knowledge creation and applications insides uses in corporate world for the purpose of strengthening the position of organization in the market (Grimsdottir&Edvardsson, 2018). Knowledge saves work, reduces communications costs, and allows a company to take on more projects (Grimsdottir&Edvardsson, 2018)" The uses of knowledge describe exploitative learning, through which firms can improve their performance in a safe and effective manner (Clegg & Clarke, 1999;Grimsdottir&Edvardsson, 2018). That is why knowledge creation practices are necessary for all the organization.

Process Innovation

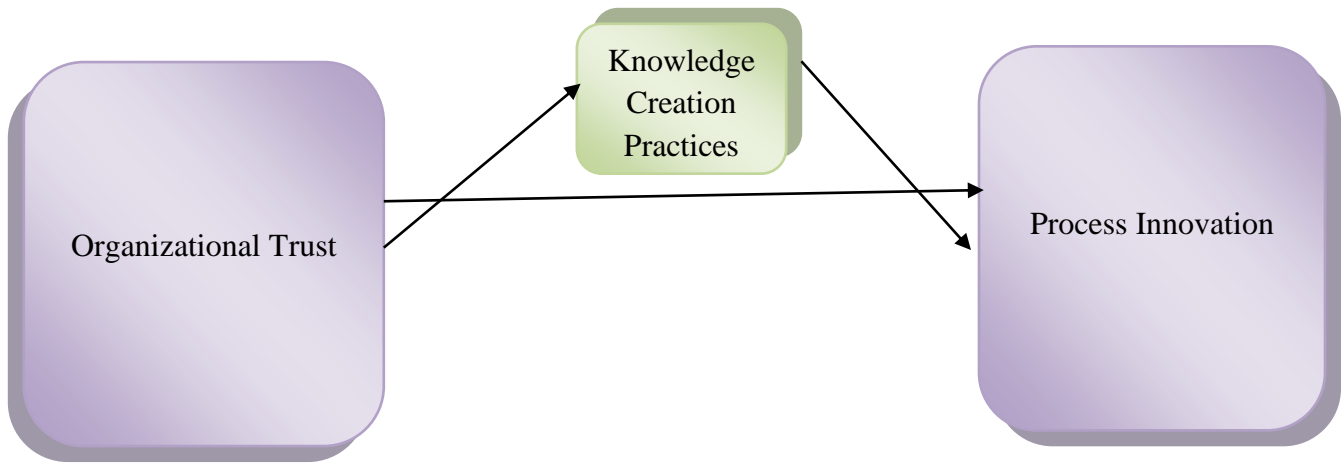
The organizational ability to practice process innovation is identified as a dynamic capability (Piening&Salge, 2015), as process innovation involves the creation, extension or modification of internal organizational, technological and/or administrative processes to enhance effective operations (Damanpour et al., 2009).

In general, innovation is at the core of organizations looking to generate economic benefits and competitive advantage (Geroski et al., 1993; Ahlstrom, 2010; Volberda et al., 2010; Seebode et al., 2012), process innovation practices contribute to cost reductions in the way activities are carried out in the organization (Cohen &Klepper, 1996; Bernstein and Kök, 2009; Cefis and Marsili, 2012; Piening and Salge, 2015). Which provide opportunities for increased productivity (Vivero, 2002). Moreover, process innovation practices are characterized by the flexible use of organizational. Resources and the development of organizational processes underpinned by routines (Helfat& Winter, 2011) can facilitate the identification of opportunities for growth.

Process innovation has positive impact on a firm's performance (Li &Atuahene, 2001, Perez, et al., 2014). Overall innovation supports the economic growth and the stability of financial systems (Lerner, &Tufano, 2011).

Process innovation can be best tool to minimize the cost, improve the production level, enhance the knowledge transmission with learning, regularize the working routine, improve the satisfaction level among the customers and also become a competitive edge for the organization (Piening&Salge, 2015; Plotnikova, et al 2016). There is strong motive behind to regularize system, follow the good practicing standards and right cooperation with outside partners will be helpful to improve learning and also to assist new process and procedures. It is not only to combine and connect with outside resources to attain and understand latest knowledge but also to legitimize and confirm the normal pressures and standards (Tsinopoulos, et al., 2018).

Conceptual Model



There is a positive and linear relationship between trust and organizational innovation (Wang et al., 2017). Moreover, Rashid, (2016) argues that organizational trust has positive impact on product and process innovation. Ford (2004) explains that organizational trust has positive significant impact on knowledge creation practices. Wang et al., (2017) investigates trust has positive effect on knowledge creation practices.

H1(a): Organizational Trust is positively related with Process Innovation.

H1(b): Organizational Trust is positively related with Knowledge creation practice.

Anna Sankowska, (2013) examined that Knowledge creation practice has positive significant Impact on process innovation.

H2: Knowledge creation practices are positively related with Process Innovation.

On the basis of above facts current study proposes the following hypothesis.

H3: Knowledge Creation Practices mediate the relationship of Organizational Trust and Process Innovation.

3.5 Measurement and Instrument

Variable Name	Instrument	No of Items
Organizational Trust	Alhidari, et al., (2018)	4
Knowledge Creation Practices	Yichen, et al., (2015)	12
Process Innovation	Liao, et al., (2007)	5

3.5.1 Research Design

This is cross-sectional and explanatory research done / carried through single case study method.

3.5.2 Target Population

Employees of Sapphire textile are the target population of the current research.

3.5.3 Sample Size

Data were collected from 290 employees.

3.5.4 Sampling Method

Data were collected from five branches of Sapphire textile through proportionate random sampling technique.

3.5.5 Sampling Technique

Data was collected with the help of Snowball sampling technique from a list of selected branches from 290 employees. Based on item response theory 1:10 (Jackson, 2003; Kim 2014 McCarthy, & Milner, 2020).

Result and Discussion

Reliability Analysis

Knowledge Creation Practices

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.709	12

Data is reliable when value of Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.60. In above table value of Cronbach's Alpha of knowledge creation practices are 0.709 this value is greater than 0.60 so data is reliable.

Organizational Trust

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.706	4

Data is reliable when value of Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.60. In above table value of Cronbach's Alpha of Organizational Trust 0.706 is this value is greater than 0.60 so data is reliable.

Process innovation

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.756	5

Data is reliable when value of Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.60. In above table value of Cronbach's Alpha of Process innovation 0.756 is this value is greater than 0.60 so data is reliable.

Correlation

		Mean Values	Standard Deviation	1	2	3
1	Process Innovation	3.9854	0.33163	1		
2	Organizational Trust	3.9915	0.30349	0.465**	1	
3	KC Practices	4.0066	0.23005	0.467**	0.428**	1

Above table describes the mean values, standard deviation and correlation analysis of all the variables.

All the variables have positive correlation with each other's. Organizational trust is positively correlates with process innovation and its coefficient of correlation is 0.465**. Knowledge creation practices is positively correlates with process innovation and its coefficient of correlation is 0.467**. Knowledge creation practices is positively correlates with Organizational trust and its coefficient of correlation is 0.428**.

Mediation of Knowledge Creation Practices between the relationship of Organizational Trust and Process Innovation

Diagram 1.

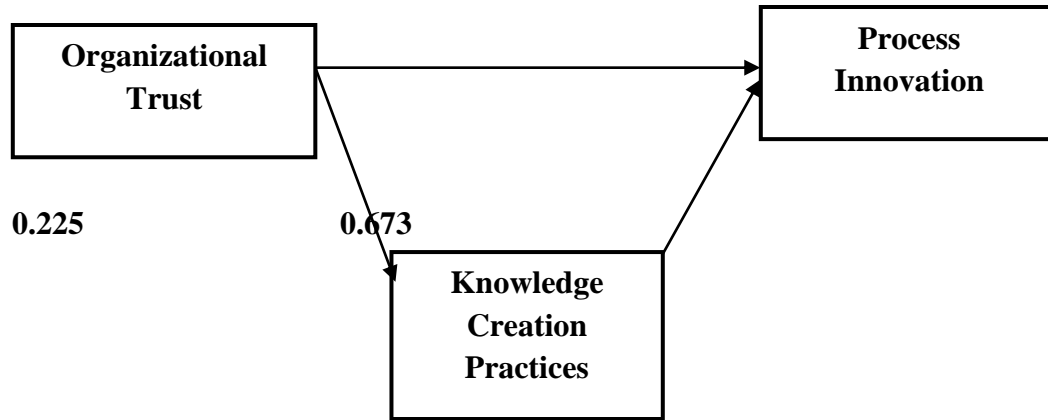


Table No. Mediation Knowledge Creation Practices between the relationship of Organizational Trust and Process Innovation

Testing Step of Mediation	“ β ”	S.E	F	R ²	Decision
Step 1 (Path c)					
Outcome: Process Innovation					
Predictor: Organizational Trust	0.508	0.055	86.334	0.216	0.000<0.01
Step 2 (Path a)					
Outcome: Knowledge Creation Practices					
Predictor: Organizational Trust	0.225	0.072	42.428	0.119	0.000<0.01
Step 3A (Path b)					
Outcome: Process Innovation					
Predictor: Knowledge Creation Practices	0.673	0.056	87.165	0.218	0.000<0.01
Step 3B Path (c')					
Outcome: Process Innovation					
Mediator: Knowledge Creation Practices	0.473	0.057			0.000<0.01
Predictor: Organizational Trust	0.355	0.075			0.000<0.01

H1(a): Organizational Trust is positively related with Process Innovation.

H1(b): Organizational Trust is positively related with Knowledge creation practice.

H2: Knowledge creation practices are positively related with Process Innovation.

H3: Knowledge Creation Practices mediate the relationship of Organizational Trust and Process Innovation.

For testing the mediation impact of knowledge creation practices, current research uses the method of Baron and Kenny (1986). For mediation analysis, organizational trust is significantly related to process innovation ($p < 0.01$); its value of β is 0.508, Our hypothesis no H1(a) is accepted and the first condition of mediation is fulfilled. For second path “a” in which organizational trust is significantly related to the knowledge creation practices ($p < 0.01$), So hypothesis no H1(b) is also accepted as its value of β 0.225. So, the second condition of mediation is also fulfilled.

In step 3A, knowledge creation practices are significantly related to the process innovation ($p < 0.01$); its value of β is 0.673, hypothesis no H2 is also accepted in path “b”. In step 3B, checked the combined effect of organizational trust and knowledge creation practices on process innovation, results are significant ($p < 0.01$) and its value of β is 0.335. Therefore, the effect of organizational trust on process innovation $\beta = 0.508$ and β of the combined effect of organizational trust and knowledge creation practices on process innovation is 0.335. Beta value is reduced from **0.508 to 0.335** which shows that partial mediation exists and value of mediation is calculated as $(a-b)/c = (0.508-0.335)/0.508 \Rightarrow 0.34$. These results show that **34%** partial mediation exists due to resilience between hope and life satisfaction.

Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

This research shows the relationship of organizational trust, knowledge creation practices, and process innovation. Results reveal that Organizational Trust has positive impact on Process Innovation; Knowledge creation practice has positive impact on Process Innovation Knowledge creation practices partially mediate the relation organizational trust and process innovation. There are some limitations of current research.

- The current study considers only the employees of Sapphire Group. Demographic variables were included in analysis and treated as control variables.
- The current research is case study on Sapphire Group, so cannot generalize the results on the organizations of other type of industry.
- Current study is carried out with the help of survey questionnaire so there is a chance that results may mislead us about actual causes and facts about proposed variables because employees did not express their own views .
- This Research also binds the employees to give their response about proposed variables.
- This Study incorporates only a few predictors of process innovation.
- The current study does not incorporate the important consequences of process innovation.
- Longitudinal studies will facilitate an understanding of the relationship between the variables in more depth.
- For generalization, in future researches employees same kind of other companies such as Ejaz textile, Shahtaj Textile, Din Textile, Masood Textile, Mahmood Group, Gul Ahmad Textile, Yunus Textile.
- Due to time and cost constrained current research is done within the given framework of research, in future researches some other variables as predictors and outcomes may also include for explaining the phenomenon of process innovation.
- In future, this kind of research will also carry out on other sectors like banking sector, construction sector and telecom sector.

- It is also worthwhile, to do mix research i.e. with the help of survey questionnaire and interviews as well.
- As knowledge practices and absorptive capacity is partial mediator between the relationship of organizational trust and process innovation, it is better to include some other potential mediator/ mediators for getting the complete mediation.

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