

## **THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND CREATIVE SELF EFFICACY ON CREATIVE WORK INVOLVEMENT**

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### **—Abstract —**

Organizational Creativity has become a relatively new and emerging research area within the field of organizational behavior. This study intends to investigate the predictors of creative work involvement through the perception of employees about organizational support and creative self efficacy. The research is conducted by 129 participants from different sectors through survey method. Empirical findings reveal that creative self efficacy and perceived organizational support affect creative work involvement positively and significantly. Depending on the fact that it is a study conducted in Turkey, it may also serve the purpose of providing a cultural perspective for international studies on organizational creativity. It also intends to provide further contribution to the business literature by pointing out managerial implications of the research concepts, and the relationships among them.

**Key Words:** *Perceived Organizational Support, Creative Self Efficacy, Creative Work Involvement*

**JEL Classification:** M19

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In today's dynamic work environment, organizations continue to realize that to remain competitive, they need their employees to be actively involved in their work, and generate novel and appropriate products, processes, and approaches. Although researchers have long been interested in the antecedents and consequences of job involvement, the studies about involvement in creative work (the extent to which an employee engages his or her time, effort and resources in creative processes associated with work) are still at their infancy (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009: 264). As a result, how and why individuals are motivated to become involved in creative work remains unclear and needs further research. Many researchers (Amabile et.al., 1996; Woodman et al, 1993; Ford, 1996) proposed that organizational creativity is affected by both personal and organizational factors. Within that framework, this study aims to explore the antecedents of creative work involvement from the perspective of organizational support and creative self efficacy perception of employees.

The aim of the study is first to explore the relationship between the concepts and then to explore the effect of perceived organizational support and creative self efficacy on creative work involvement. It intends to provide further contribution to the business literature by pointing out managerial implications of the research concepts, and the relationships among them.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Perceived Organizational Support (POS)**

The concept of perceived organizational support is derived from organizational support theory and the tendency of employees to assign human like characteristics to the organization (Eisenberger et.al., 1986: 501). According to organizational support theory, in order to meet their socio emotional needs and to evaluate the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a perception comprising the extent to which the organization values their contributions and their well-being. Perceived organizational support can be defined as an employee's perception that the organization values his or her contribution and cares about the employee's well being (Eisenberger et. al., 1986:500). Organizational support can be defined as the organization's support by placing value on the well being of the employees, also recognizing the needs and contributions of employees (Randall et.al., 1999). Perceived organizational support can be defined as the perception developed through the politics, procedures and decisions, which can be considered as the

indicators of how well an organization values the contribution and well being of the employees (Lynch et.al., 1999:469). According to Muse & Stamper (2007:517), perceived organizational support can be analyzed in two constructs as care about employees' outcomes , performance and care about employees' well-being and respect.

## **2.2. Creative Self Efficacy**

Bandura (1982:122) defined self-efficacy as one's belief of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations. According to Stakovic & Luthans (1998:66), self efficacy refers to an individual's conviction about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context. People with high self-efficacy are found to view difficult tasks as something to be mastered rather than something to be avoided (Bandura,1977:194), therefore self efficacy can be considered as an antecedent for creative productivity. Self efficacy beliefs influence the motivation to engage in specific behavior and to involve in tasks (Bandura, 1977:199). Owing to that reason, self-efficacy is also viewed as a concept for understanding creative action in organizational settings. Working from Bandura's general definition of self efficacy, Tierney & Farmer (2002) introduced creative self efficacy concept. Creative self efficacy is defined as the belief one has the ability to produce creative outcomes (Tierney & Farmer, 2002: 1138). The concept differs from the general self efficacy as the latter comprises the overall belief in one' capability across domains.

## **2.3. Creative Work Involvement**

In today's dynamic work environment, organizations continue to realize that to remain competitive, they need their employees to be actively involved in their work, and generate novel and appropriate products, processes, and approaches. Creativity is often described as individuals feeling motivated to perform their work, such that they are actively engaged in their work (Amabile et al., 1996:1156). Smith & Shalley (2003:90) claimed that individuals can be creative in their work, by generating new ways to perform their work, by coming up with novel procedures and innovative ideas, and by adapting known approaches to new alternatives. Therefore it can be suggested that creativity does not have to exist only on special types of projects, but it can occur in various work situations in which an employee performs. Although researchers have long been interested in the antecedents and consequences of job involvement (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009:264), relatively little is known about involvement in creative work. Creative

work involvement refers to an employee's engagement (in terms of time and effort) in creative processes associated with work (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2007:36). It manifests a person's subjective assessment of the degree to which he or she is engaged in creative tasks (Kark & Carmeli, 2009:787). Creative work involvement has vital importance for creative achievements and innovation (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009:264). Gilson & Shalley (2004:454) discussed that engagement in creative processes involved employees behaviorally, cognitively, and emotionally attempting new things or ways regarding their work. Therefore, creative work involvement can be conceptualized as a pre-condition for creative outcomes, performance, and innovation.

### **3. RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS**

Studies about self efficacy have revealed that it is associated with higher performance levels (McNatt & Judge, 2004; Bandura, 1977). Recent studies about creativity also point attention to the impact of creative self efficacy on employee creative work involvement (Tierney & Farmer, 2002:1137; Choi, 2004:187; Gong et.al., 2009:765). Creative involvement is a demanding effort which requires time, energy, motivation and tolerance for risk. Given those demands, creative self efficacy may be indicated as an important predictor for creative work involvement. Although the studies about creative work involvement are still at their infancy, some studies have shown a relationship between creative self efficacy and creative work involvement. Carmeli & Schaubroeck (2007:35) demonstrated that creative self-efficacy predicted self-reported creative work involvement in a sample of two financial service organizations in Israel. Creative self-efficacy is also found to predict creative performance beyond the predictive effects of job self-efficacy (Tierney&Farmer,2002:1137).

Perceived organizational support is another concept, found to be related with job involvement (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and innovation (Eisenberger et. al., 1990). Employees experiencing a strong level of perceived organizational support are found to feel the need to reciprocate the treatment with attitudes and behaviors for the benefit of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It is also revealed that the individuals , perceiving positive levels of organizational support, are more intrinsically encouraged towards exerting considerably higher levels of effort (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013:36). Therefore, perceived organizational support can be expected to have effect on positive work attitudes such as creative work involvement. Within the framework of literature review, it is possible to propose the following hypothesis.

H1: Creative self efficacy and perceived organizational support affect creative work involvement positively and significantly.

#### **4. METHODOLOGY**

The data were gathered conveniently from 129 white collar employees who work in companies of different sectors and departments. It was collected both as traditional paper and pen form of survey and as soft copy form survey. 200 questionnaire forms were distributed and 129 were returned with % 64.5 response rate. For measuring perceived organizational support, Eisenberger et.al.'s (1986) scale is used. The original scale comprises 36 items. A shorter version of instrument with 8-item measure with six point Likert type scale is used following the recommendation of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002: 699) that the use of shorter versions does not appear problematic and both valuation of employees' contribution and care about employees' well-being are represented in short version of the questionnaire. Creative self efficacy is measured with an eight – item measure and six-point Likert-type scale developed by Carmeli and Schaubroeck (2007). General efficacy scale developed by Chen et.al. (2001) was modified to match the context of creativity. For measuring creative work involvement, Carmeli and Schaubroeck's (2007) scale for assessing employee involvement in creative work is used. This scale is based on a nine-item measure of employee creativity developed and used by Tierney et al. (1999). Tierney and colleagues developed a nine item scale in which supervisors rated the creativity of their employees from the perspective of idea generation and implementation. Carmeli and Schaubroeck (2007) modified the scale to measure employee's own perception in creative work involvement. Five-point Likert-type scale is used. Demographic characteristics that were interrogated in the study were gender, age, education, work position, organizational tenure, and work tenure.

#### **5. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Results of this study were evaluated using the SPSS 16.0. A brief look at the demographic figures of the participants reveals that 60% of the respondents were male. It was observed that 61% of them had graduate degrees and 65% of them were technical staff and specialists. The majority of the respondents (34%) were between the ages of 26-30 years. Nearly half of the respondents had an organizational and work tenure of more than 5 years.

For creative work involvement, it was seen that KMO value was 0.879 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ); which indicated that the data was adequate and appropriate to conduct factor analysis. Two factors

were acquired: Creative Work Involvement related with Idea Generation and Idea Implementation. Explained variance by idea generation was 48.941%, whereas it was 30.365% variance of the scale for idea implementation. In total, they explained 79.306% of the variance. Cronbach's alpha for the factors were 0.933 and 0.917 respectively. For creative self efficacy, it was seen that KMO value was 0.823 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). One factor was acquired. It explained 77.865 % of the variance. Cronbach's alpha for the factor was 0.905. For perceived organizational support, it was seen that KMO value was 0.821 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). One factor was acquired and it explained 84.666 % of the variance. Cronbach's alpha for the factor was 0.937.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

		Creative Work Involvement (Total)	Creative Work Involvement related with Idea Generation (Factor 1)	Creative Work Involvement related with Idea Implementation (Factor 2)
Creative Self Efficacy	r	.585**	.510**	.534**
	p	.000	.000	.000
Perceived Organizational Support	r	.553**	.440**	.591**
	p	.000	.000	.000

\*\* :  $p < 0.01$

Table 2: Summary of regression analysis

<b>Dependent Variable: Creative Work Involvement</b>			
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Creative Self Efficacy	0.392	4.353	.000
Perceived Organizational Support	0.302	3.358	.001
R: 0.630, R <sup>2</sup> : 0.397, Adj. R <sup>2</sup> : 0.387, F:41.411, p:.000			
<b>Dependent Variable: Creative Work Involvement related with Idea Generation (Factor 1)</b>			
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Creative Self Efficacy	0.386	3.931	.000
Perceived Organizational Support	0.193	1.963	.050
R: 0.531, R <sup>2</sup> : 0.282, Adj. R <sup>2</sup> : 0.270, F:24.705, p:.000			
<b>Dependent Variable: Creative Work Involvement related with Idea Implementation (Factor 2)</b>			
<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Creative Self Efficacy	0.264	2.915	.004
Perceived Organizational Support	0.422	4.658	.000
R: 0.624, R <sup>2</sup> : 0.390, Adj. R <sup>2</sup> : 0.380, F:40.272, p:.000			

As can be observed from Table 1, correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between the research concepts. There is found to be a moderately strong relationship between creative self efficacy, perceived organizational support and creative work involvement.

As seen in Table 2, regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis statistically. The regression model was found to be significant as a whole ( $F:41.411$ ,  $p<0.01$ ); it explained 39.7% of the change in creative work involvement. The findings showed that, as predicted in H1, creative self efficacy and perceived organizational support has positive and significant effects on creative work involvement ( $\beta: 0.392$ ,  $p<0.01$ ;  $\beta: 0.302$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Thus, H1 is supported.

The mean values for creative self efficacy and perceived organizational support were 4.12 and 4.00 respectively. The mean value for creative work involvement was 3.31. The mean score for idea implementation factor (mean value: 3.58) was higher than idea generation factor (mean value: 3.17). Regarding demographics, there were not any significant differences found in terms of gender, age, education, work-position, organizational tenure, and work tenure.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In general, the results support contextual theories of creativity which contend that it is the psychological meaning of the work environment and social interaction, together with personal factors that largely influence creative involvement. Today, creativity has become an important factor for the success and competitive advantage of organizations and a strong economy (Woodman et al., 1993), because organizations face a dynamic environment which is surrounded by rapid technological changes, shortened product life cycles and globalization. Researchers have claimed that in order to deal with the environmental pressures, and to enhance the innovativeness of organizations, the creative performance of the employees need to be improved, because creativity is considered as the starting point of all innovations (Amabile et.al., 1996). The focus of this study was both on the perception of contextual factors and personal factors that could predict creative work involvement. The findings showed that both perceived organizational support and creative self efficacy positively and significantly affect creative work involvement. It can be assumed that creative involvements require a perception of efficacy to persist in creative endeavors (Bandura, 1997: 239) depending on the fact that they demand prolonged investment of time and effort, slow progress, and highly uncertain outcomes. There is found to be a moderately strong relationship between creative self efficacy and creative work involvement.

Furthermore, creative self efficacy increases creative work involvement with a significant effect. There is also found to be a moderately strong relationship between perceived organizational support and creative work involvement. The relationship is stronger for idea implementation aspect of creative work involvement. This may be an indicator of the fact that the perceived support in terms of acknowledgement of efforts and care for well being provides the necessary motivation to involve in implementing creative ideas. Perceived organizational support is found to affect creative work involvement. A considerable amount of literature (Woodman et al, 1993; Amabile et al., 1996; Zhou, 2003) is related with the relationship between intrinsic motivation and creativity. The role of creative self-efficacy and perceived organizational support on creative work involvement, may also provide additional light on how intrinsic motivation play an important role for creative performance.

The results of the study serve some suggestions for managerial implications as well. An important predictor for creative work involvement is found to be creative self efficacy. Those findings are especially important for the recruitment process of the organizations, where creativity is essential. The analysis results show that managers should especially seek to recruit employees possessing creative self efficacy as a salient individual perception. The analysis also points the need to focus on policies and practices to enable employees to perceive organizational support for their contribution and well being.

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