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Factors affecting employees' innovative behavior in enterprises: The case of Vietnam

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Abstract: Innovation is considered the lever for growth and prosperity in business and the solution to a range of organizational problems, especially when the Covid-19 pandemic is still spreading. Many companies have dissolved because of being unable to achieve sustainable growth in industrial revolutions. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of Empowerment Leadership (EL), Workplace Happiness (WPH), and Work Satisfaction (WS) on employees' innovative behavior in the Vietnam context. The research was conducted on 455 employees in different enterprises throughout Vietnam showed that Empowerment Leadership and Work Satisfaction positively affect innovative behavior. In contrast, Workplace Happiness proved to have no relationship with it.

Keywords: Innovative Behavior, Empowerment Leadership, Workplace Happiness, Work Satisfaction, Vietnam

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, to survive and operate efficiently enough, companies need to develop and apply new practices and build their positions by improving the current way and finding new methods [1]. Innovation as an essential component of social and economic development is supposed to be a necessary and powerful tool on the path for business [1]. According to [2], employees must go the extra mile and exceed their standard work behaviors by engaging in innovative behavior to deal with environmental uncertainty.Although many studies about employees' innovative behavior have been done, few studies have focused on understanding the factors or processes that lead to it[3]. Identifying the potential drivers of employees' innovative behavior remains an important research topic[4]. Therefore, employees' innovative behavior and potential drivers or processes remain an essential research topic [4] and focus on many studies [1, 5-7].

This study is done focusing on two aims. The first aim of the current study is to identify the determinants of employees' innovative behavior. Many researchers approved that efficiency in the employees' innovative behavior is affected by many different factors[4, 8]. However, our study focuses on the relationship between employees' innovative behavior and Empowerment Leadership, Workplace Happiness, Work Satisfaction. This is important for organizations to know how to manage employees' innovative behaviors efficiently. The second aim is to give organizations, enterprises, and administrators recommendations to spur the employees' innovative behavior in Viet Nam's context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Innovative behavior - IB

Based on [1], employees' innovative behaviors are defined as the generation, promotion, and realization of new ideas in products and processes, which is different from the concept of creativity, which only focuses on generating new and valuable ideas. In [2], the authors proposed that Innovative behavior in the workplace is conceived as complex behavior consisting of three different behavioral tasks, idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization. Individual innovation begins with idea generation: the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain [2].

2.2. Empowerment Leadership - EL

Leadership style is one of the most important factors affecting organizational innovation[1]. Empowerment Leadership is a broad concept that refers to a process of sharing power with employees and raising the level of autonomy and obligation to followers through a specific set of leader behaviors that entails enhancing the meaning of work [2]. A leader who empowers his employees will transfer the authority to his employees, involve them in decision-making, and give positive energy to the employees to face the job's challenges. Therefore, employees can perform their duties and responsibilities with less supervision and intervention from their leaders [2]. The empowerment leader will provide space to the employees to express themselves in different ways with the standard procedure, eliminating the fear of false of the role carried out as part of the consequences of imposed jobs to encourage innovation by increasing the employees' confidence [9]. Previous researches also verified the role of EL in improving employees' innovative behavior [10-12]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: Empowerment Leadership positively affects employees' innovative behavior.

2.3. Workplace Happiness - WH

According to [13], happiness is one component of mood. Workplace happiness is when employees feel happy at work and suppose their work climate as something pleasurable and enjoyable [14]. It consisted of all aspects of work that nurture pleasing, happy, well-being emotions that create satisfying and enjoyable work [4]. Employees tend to be more creative and innovative whenever they are in a state of peace or happiness, which leads to a positive organizational impact [4]. Happy employees are found and strongly agured to be significantly more productive, develop innovative ideas, save time, and spur effectiveness by inventing new working methods[15]. Given the above arguments, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Workplace Happiness positively affects employees' innovative behavior.

2.4. Work Satisfaction - WS

Work satisfaction is defined as the positive emotional response of the individual to the particular work he performs, provided that his professional values are fulfilled [16]. For [17], work satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. In addition, according to [18], when employees feel satisfied with their jobs, they will be more committed to the organization and their work performance, thus engaging in more positive behaviors. They will also look for various methods to improve their work performance and will be more able to accept new, innovative ideas. According to [19], employees will engage in more innovative behavior if they have greater work satisfaction, while the authors in [20] also found that work satisfaction and innovative behavior are positively related. Based on a review of the studies mentioned above, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Work Satisfaction positively affects employees'innovative behavior.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to the previous researches and research objects which have been stated above, the conceptual framework can be as following:

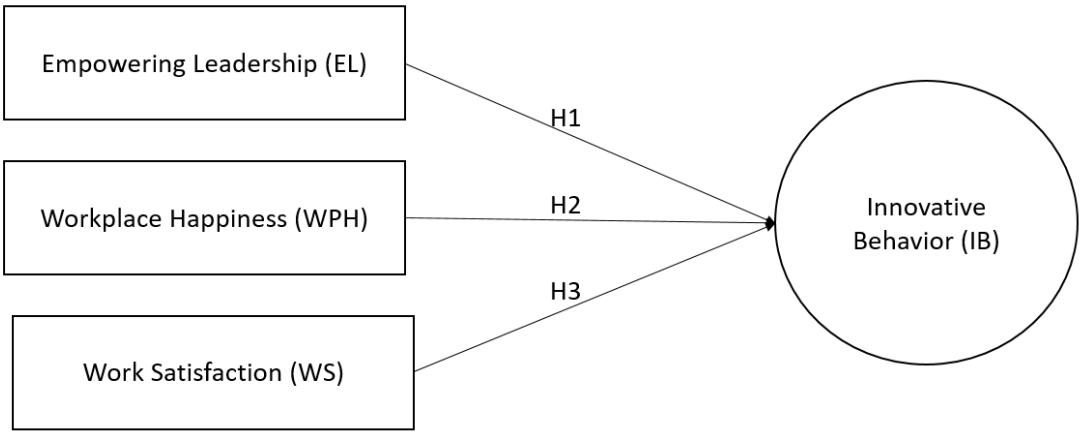

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Source of Data

Primary and secondary methods are used for collecting data. The authors used online and physical surveys for collecting primary data by a structured questionnaire. Tools such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, and Proquest were used for collecting secondary data.

4.2. Questionnaire

In this study, the authors referenced some measures from different researchers and then translated them into Vietnamese to calculate mentioned factors with employees in Vietnam. Before deploying the official survey, we checked it with ten employees working in companies first to ensure its legibility and comprehensibility. Particularly, the measure in [21]was consulted to estimate Empowerment Leadership factor, [4] was for Workplace Happiness, and [22]was for Work Satisfaction. Variables were measured on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In terms of Empowerment Leadership, we had 4 sub-factors: Increasing the Meaning of Work (EL_W), Promote participation in Decision making (EL_D), Show confidence in high Performance (EL_P), Provide autonomy from Bureaucratic constraints (EL_B).

4.3. Methods of Data Analysis

From the valid questionnaires collected, the authors turned to Excel and coded each part of the survey questionnaire. Next, all data were processed through the SPSS 22.0 software. The authors conducted three analysis and testing steps. Firstly, Cronbach's alpha analysis and explorative factor analysis (EFA) are implemented to assess variables' reliability. Secondly, the authors use linear regression analysis for estimating the relationship among variables.

V. RESULTS

5.1. Respondent Characteristics

As the data of 455 respondents that the authors collected, it shows that most employees are women (55.6%), age 20-30 years (74.9%), 6-10 years of working experience (42.6%), below 5 million VND of income (27.7%) and with firm size of 50-100 people (32.1%). The fields of respondents are mainly relating to finance (18.7%), education (15.6%), and real estate (10.1%).

5.2. Reliability Analysis

In this study, we conducted to verify Cronbach's Alpha reliability with each factor to evaluate the scale's internal consistency and delete the low-reliability items. For exploratory studies, the variable that has a Corrected item-total correlation ≥ 0.30 is valid; scale with Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.60 is an acceptable scale in terms of reliability [23, 24]. In Table 1, we present the results of the reliability analysis of the indicators:

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of Research

Cronbach's Alpha	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
0.847	EL_W1	7.69	2.774	0.761	0.740
	EL_W2	7.71	2.975	0.710	0.791
	EL_W3	7.69	3.050	0.674	0.825
0.832	EL_D1	7.36	2.954	0.693	0.766
	EL_D2	7.44	2.938	0.674	0.785
	EL_D3	7.35	2.897	0.707	0.752
0.804	EL_P1	7.58	2.834	0.589	0.797
	EL_P2	7.64	2.607	0.676	0.706
	EL_P3	7.58	2.662	0.691	0.691
0.887	EL_B1	7.05	3.687	0.772	0.847
	EL_B2	7.02	3.777	0.780	0.841
	EL_B3	7.12	3.684	0.789	0.833
0.891	WPH1	25.74	27.685	0.638	0.880
	WPH2	25.80	28.013	0.653	0.879
	WPH3	25.97	27.669	0.650	0.879
	WPH4	25.78	28.179	0.720	0.873

	WPH5	25.85	28.377	0.705	0.874
	WPH6	25.89	27.194	0.672	0.877
	WPH7	25.83	27.518	0.637	0.880
	WPH8	25.91	27.642	0.680	0.876
0.888	WS1	13.09	10.045	0.670	0.878
	WS2	13.03	9.462	0.758	0.858
	WS3	13.15	9.610	0.765	0.856
	WS4	13.06	9.461	0.781	0.852
	WS5	12.93	9.891	0.674	0.877
0.801	IB1	11.09	2.893	0.616	0.751
	IB2	11.20	2.787	0.580	0.769
	IB3	11.19	2.800	0.646	0.736
	IB4	11.03	2.794	0.617	0.750

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of mentioned items were all greater than 0.50, showing a reasonable scale. Based on Table I, the factors had Cronbach's Alpha coefficient greater than 0.80, which led to an excellent scale[25]. Therefore, the authors concluded that the scale in this study had good reliability.

5.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The authors consider 29 items of innovation behavior and three factors as mentioned to calculate in this step. Firstly, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value [$\chi 2 = 6630.762$; $p < 0.001$] was significant, rejecting the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix was an identity matrix. Besides, the KMO value was $0.853 > 0.50$, which illustrated the availability of a good number of items for each factor. The next step was to identify eigenvalues, percentage of variances, and factor loading. In the current study, 11 factors with eigenvalues over 1 emerged from the EFA, explaining 68.595% of the total variance. The authors deployed the component matrix after varimax rotation to determine the items relating to each factor. On the other hand, all chosen 29 items with high loading factors ranging from 0.723 to 0.858 (>0.50) were entered. From EFA, the authors extracted seven components (EL_W, EL_D, EL_P, EL_B, WPH, WS, IB) to continue the step of linear regression analysis.

5.4. Regression Analysis

This section of the study presents the results and discussions of the regression output. To examine the impact of the relationship between given factors and employee's innovative behavior, regression model was estimated. The regression analysis enables the researcher to empirically test the proposed hypothesis and to achieve the research objective. From the findings, the adjusted R2 was used to establish the predictive power of the study model; however, it was found to be 0.220, implying that changes in factors mentioned explain 22% of the variations in employee's innovative behavior.The probability value of 0.000^b indicates that the regression relationship was highly significant in predicting how shown factors influenced innovative behavior.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	29.994	3	9.998	43.635	0.000^b
Residual	103.337	451	0.229		
Total	133.330	454			

The analysis results also showed that Workplace Happiness (WPH) has no significance to employee's innovative behavior. Therefore, hypothesis H2 was rejected. Empowerment Leadership (EL)(*Beta* = 0.248,*Sig.* = 0.032) and Work Satisfaction(*Beta* = 0.120, *Sig.* = 0.041) were the factorspositively relating to employees' innovative behavior. Besides, Empowerment Leadership impacted more than Work Satisfaction.

Table 3: Coefficients of Linear Regression

Model	Beta	t	Sig.

EL	0.248	2,001	0.032
WPH	-0.013	-0.210	0.909
WS	0.120	1.897	0.041

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The group author can only survey employees in common fields and cannot cover the whole spectrum of different occupations. Besides, the responses are mostly in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh, considered the biggest cities in Vietnam. Then it is insufficient to represent all employees in all industries.

The research results indicate that Empowerment Leadership and Work Satisfaction positively impact innovative behavior, while Workplace Happiness has no significance. As the results, the authors propose some suggestions relating to Empowerment Leadership and Work Satisfaction for business managers or C-level administrators in Vietnam to promote employee's innovative behavior below:

6.1. Empowerment Leadership

Firstly, organizing policies to foster, train and develop leadership styles for administrators and employees. The training process should encourage creativity, ideas launching new products, markets, management tools, and approaches of applying tool; focus on building relationship system that is open harmony between superiors and subordinates, competence practice, inspiring the employees.

Second, building a comfortable and open working environment, communication between managers and their employees. Employees, facilitating and finding opportunities for their employees to have the courage to express their new ideas, even helping them apply those ideas more smoothly if they are suitable and helpful for the business. These leaders also must cultivate their vision, get to know each of their employees, then arrange the tasks suitable for each person, helping them develop themselves.

Third, assign the tasks, responsibilities, and powers to employees clearly and evaluate after completing the work. Administrators need to explain their reasons, goals, results, and powers and find the best way to do the job. Encourage them to ask questions, discuss possible problems and how to handle them if they happen. In addition, administrators need to make sure the empowered person has everything they need to do a good job. The administrator needs to reevaluate the work finished and what needs to change after that.

6.2. Work Satisfaction

First, praise, commend or reward employees' efforts and hard work. According to [26], companies wishing to achieve employee satisfaction levels need to consider non-material motivational mechanisms. Regarding the employees' mentality, the compliment in front of many other employees will make them feel comfortable, happy, and satisfied, thereby promoting their desire to contribute more to the organization. When a subordinate or an employee is rewarded for gaining a particular goal or the expectations set by a leader or superior, they become satisfied with their job.

Second, put the employees' benefits higher, ensuring fairness and worthiness in the salary and bonus system. Job satisfaction is provided with the possible tasks, physical conditions, social facilities, and directly related to the factors that enable employees to lead a good and comfortable life in finance[27]. Therefore, businesses need to make enough effort to ensure that payment systems (pay salaries, overtime pay, bonuses, so on) are applied fairly among employees.

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