

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**Stuck in a rut – Can I try something different? The role of
intrinsic motivation and mood in the creative performance of ICT
professionals**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Business Studies
in
Human Resource Management

at Massey University, Albany,
New Zealand

Rohit Subhash Piplani

2018

Abstract

In a hyper-competitive and knowledge-based economy, creativity and innovation are considered as the lifeblood of success for ICT firms. Literature suggests that intrinsic motivation and positive mood drive the creative performance of employees. Nonetheless, the mechanism through which creativity antecedents influence the creative performance of IT professionals is seldom examined. Furthermore, the assertion that intrinsic motivation and positive mood – through motivational-affective mechanisms – spur employee creativity has rarely been tested. Therefore, drawing on Self-Determination theory, Cognitive Evaluation theory and Componential theory of creativity, the current study examines the relationship between specific creativity antecedents (job flexibility, perceived supervisor support for creativity, creative role identity and creative self-efficacy), intrinsic motivation, positive mood and creative performance of IT employees. Partial-least-squares based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was conducted using survey data collected from 157 IT professionals working in various organisations, including both multinational corporations and tech start-ups, in United States (USA). The results suggested that job flexibility, perceived supervisor support for creativity, creative role identity and creative self-efficacy positively and significantly influence creative performance of IT professionals. Specifically, both intrinsic motivation and positive mood were found to mediate the relationship between personal and contextual factors (creativity antecedents) and employee creativity, thereby playing a role of chain mediators. The findings highlight the significance of motivational-affective mechanisms underpinning employee creativity. Implications of the results for theory and practice are also discussed.

Acknowledgements

‘Being original is definitely not easy, but it’s the best way to improve the world around us’ – I vividly remember Adam Grant saying this fervently in his now very famous and most viewed TED talk on ‘original thinking’. This is what struck my mind and propelled me to embark on a journey to explore and comprehend the mechanisms that underpin creative behavior and actions. Along with this striking vignette, the quest to learn new things and incessantly ask questions – inculcated in me by my loving parents, my friends and peers and my teachers right from childhood – helped me to complete this onerous but exciting journey. I am extremely grateful and forever indebted to all the people that have supported me through my research journey.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my primary supervisor and advisor, Professor Tim Bentley for his consistent support, patience and guidance. I believe, I have been incredibly fortunate to have an advisor who gave me the liberty to explore my ideas and helped me find my passion in research. He not only taught me to trust my ideas but also encouraged me to learn new ones by providing me an opportunity to be a part of the ‘Healthy Work’ research group and involving me in national level research projects like the New Zealand Workplace barometer. I cannot thank him enough for supporting my application for the Massey Masterate Scholarship and expeditiously completing all the paperwork even when he was in Europe, inundated with his research duties. Tim, is an epitome of what I endeavour to become as a teacher, researcher, colleague and mentor.

Special thanks to Massey University, School of Management, particularly, Professor Stephen Kelly (Head of school) and Associate Professor Bevan Catley (Associate head of school) for awarding me the Massey University Masterate Scholarship which encouraged me to sedulously pursue my research study.

I feel immensely privileged to have been a beneficiary of Dr. Nazim Taskin’s – my co-supervisor – tutelage and wisdom. He has provided me his unique insights on how to develop surveys and test models and has always been generous in extending his helping hand. He truly has been my valuable statistical guru. In addition, he has taught me to focus on the strengths

of my research and to tackle its flaws by thinking about the different approaches one can adopt to solve a problem. Thanks, Nazim for being a great mentor.

My heartfelt thanks to Dr. Darryl Forsyth and Dr. Natalia D'souza for their thought-provoking and insightful lectures during my first year at Massey University. Their interesting classes – filled with lots of practical and real-life examples – helped me build a solid foundation in research methods, provided me with vital research skills needed to complete research projects and ameliorated my critical writing skills.

I would also like to sincerely thank my employer KITE and my manager Terry Swanson for their immeasurable support, both in terms of providing work flexibility and unending encouragement to pursue my dreams. A number of friends who accompanied me on this journey have made my time in graduate school much more delightful by encouraging me to celebrate every accomplishment along the way. Thank you for your hilarious jokes (sometimes silly) and crazy anecdotes that helped me get through the obstacles to blue skies. I am grateful to have had the ear and advice of my buddies, particularly Onn, Parin, Michael and Rakhi.

Last, but certainly not the least, thank you to my most favorite people in this world (Mom, Dad, Sister and bro-in law) – my loving family for their unswerving support, consistent motivation and unconditional love. Mama and Papa, thank you for being my pillar, for putting us first, for inculcating in me a strong work ethic and discipline and for always encouraging me to be resourceful. Thank you Shilpa, my adorable sister, for always believing in me and standing by my side. I would not have been where I am today without all your sacrifices and hard work for our family. I really admire what you and Ashwin have accomplished as young entrepreneurs. I dedicate this thesis to you. None of this would have been possible without your love and support.

For all that has been, Thanks. For all that will be, Yes.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	7
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Research Background	8
1.2 Problem Statement.....	11
1.3 Purpose of study and research objectives	12
1.4 Thesis Structure	15
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	17
2.1 Introduction.....	17
2.2 Conceptualizations of employee creativity	17
2.3 Importance of creativity and innovation to Tech sector	20
2.4 Theoretical framework: Linking creativity antecedents, intrinsic motivation, mood and employee creativity.....	23
2.5 Contextual Factors affecting creative performance of ICT professionals	29
2.5.1 Perceived supervisor support for creativity and related hypotheses	29
2.5.2 Job Flexibility and related hypotheses.....	34
2.6 Personal/Individual factors affecting creative performance of ICT professionals	41
2.6.1 Creative role identity and related hypotheses	41
2.6.2 Creative self-efficacy and related hypotheses.....	46
2.7 Role of intrinsic motivation and mood in the creative performance of ICT professionals	50
2.8 Theoretical/Conceptualized model and hypotheses.....	56
2.8.1 Theoretical model.....	56
2.8.2 Hypotheses	58
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY	60
3.1 Introduction.....	60
3.2 Research design overview.....	60
3.3 Sample/Participants.....	62
3.4 Materials and measures.....	66
3.5 Procedure	69
3.6 Ethical Considerations	71
CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS	72
4.1 Data analysis overview	72
4.2 Data entry and missing data	73
4.3 Measurement model.....	73
4.4 Structural model.....	78
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	87
5.1 Discussion of results and key contributions.....	87
5.2 Practical implications for Managers	90
5.3 Implications for theory.....	93
5.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research	93
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS	95
REFERENCES	97

APPENDICES	116
Appendix A: Participant information sheet.....	116
Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire.....	117
Appendix C: Low Risk Notification	136

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1. Thesis Structure	16
Figure 2. Self-Determination theory	24
Figure 3. Amabile’s Componential theory of creativity	26
Figure 4. Overview of the conceptual model.....	28
Figure 5. Role identity theory in a creative context.....	43
Figure 6. Theoretical model depicting chain mediation effect of intrinsic motivation and positive mood.....	57
Figure 7. Direct effects of Contextual and Personal factors on Creative Performance	80
Figure 8. Estimated Parameters in the structural model	83
Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants.....	64
Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis and loadings	75
Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations between latent variables and square root of AVE’s in diagonal	77
Table 4. Validity, Reliability and Unidimensionality of constructs	78
Table 5. Path coefficients for direct effects of independent variables on the outcome variable.....	79
Table 6. Path coefficients for the proposed conceptualized mediation model	82
Table 7. Path coefficients and their statistical significance only for each chain indirect effect between IV & DV	82
Table 8. Hypotheses and their status	83
Table 9. Model fit and Quality Indices for the proposed mediation model (as defined in WarpPLS output)	85