

Customer Orientation of service employees an enabler of creativity and innovativeness: A case of ICT sector of Pakistan

Shanza Khan

Ph.D. Scholar

Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, Islamabad

Dr. Muhammad Asif Khan

Head of the Department, Faculty of Management Science

Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, Islamabad

Abstract

In the present study role of customer orientation of service employees was studied in enabling proactive creativity of employees that lead to the improved organizational innovativeness in ICT sector of Pakistan. The competition in ICT is ever-increasing and the turbulence renders the life cycles of the products and services short. Customer-orientation of service employees and their ability to be proactively creative can positively impact the organization's innovativeness. Aforementioned phenomena was studied along with development of a new scale for proactive creativity. A sample of three hundred and seven ICT professionals was selected using stratified random sampling to study the phenomenon. The results of the study confirmed the hypothesized relationships among the variables that is customer orientation alone can positively impact the organizational innovativeness but the impact increases when the employees are proactively creative. The study holds importance from academic and also from the managerial perspective because a new scale to measure proactive creativity was developed in the study that adds into the theory of creativity. Secondly, the results highlighted the importance of not only making customer-focus priority for the organizational success but also emphasized the need of hiring proactively creative employees who can ascertain the encouragement of organizational innovativeness.

Keywords: Customer-orientation of service employees, proactive creativity, organizational innovativeness, perspective-taking, pro-social motivation, dynamic capabilities view.

Introduction

There is an agreement among scholars that in changing and developing industries, innovation is the key to competitive advantage (Gomezelj & Gomezelj, 2016; Jimenez-Jimenez & Sanz-Valle, 2011; Krygidou & Spyropoulou, 2013; Ngo & O'Cass, 2013). The success of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) firms, now is largely dependent on their capability to innovate (Chassagnon, Haned & Bas, 2016). Innovation in an industry can take various forms such as a new product, service, idea, process or a system and leads to development of adoption and creation of market leading styles, technologies and offerings for an organization (Bilgihan, Okumus & Kwun, 2011; Miller, 1988; Ren, Xie, & Krabbendam, 2010). An organization that encourages customer oriented behaviour among employees is able to tap the changing requirements and preferences of the present and the potential customers ahead of the

competition and serve in an innovative manner (Al-alak & Tarabieh, 2011; Zhou, Brown & Dev, 2009).

Customer orientation is giving the needs and preferences of the customers the foremost importance and is embedded in the systems of service-oriented firms. It reflects the sufficient understanding of one's customer and thus creating and providing value continuously (Wang, Wang & Zhao, 2015; Wang, Zhao, & Voss, 2016). Greater an organization is customer oriented, better it will be aware of the customer's latent, present and future needs and therefore will be able to innovatively meet those needs by either proposing new product features or new products altogether. This suggests that customer orientation leads to increased organizational innovativeness and therefore a positive impact on the overall business performance (Kim, 2017).

Recent progressions in the ICT sector blurred the distinctions in the both industries i.e. telecom and software. This made the knowledge bases now required much different from the existing ones. Products and services being developed and introduced are a result of convergence, which occurs when innovations take place at the crossroads of the boundaries of two clearly different industries. Such innovations have obviously a broader scope, impact and serve as more multipurpose as compared to its rivals (Hacklin, Marxt & Fahrni, 2009).

ICT based services have become one of the most profitable industries that can help the developing economies to join the league of the developed ones. The size and pace of the growth of these industries are much higher as compared to others. Many developing countries such as Pakistan, China, India, Thailand etc. have moved ahead by capitalizing on the potential of IT and IT-based industries (Economic Pakistan, 2008). This led to a tremendous growth in ICT in the Asian countries which is further supported by friendly policies of respective governments (Ameen & Gorman, 2009).

Pakistan's ICT industry is emerging and constantly growing with IT remittances grown up to 41%, increased broadband permeation to 15% and availability of mobile broadband services across the country in 200 cities. Furthermore the sector contributed Rs. 126.30 billion to the national income in the financial year 2014 (The Express Tribune, 2016).

Major technological breakthroughs and unique services are a result of creative brains working behind the boom of internet and 3G, 4G subscriptions. Employee creativity is the defined as the generation of new and useful ideas which become the source of innovativeness for the organizations with dynamic interval as well as external environments (Amabile, 1988; Chang, Jia, Takeuchi & Cai, 2014; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). Organizational innovativeness, as Wang and Ahmed (2004) conceptualized is the ability of the organizations to deliver innovative outcomes that can take the form of product, process, strategic, market and behavioral. These technologies are now calling for the development of creative applications more than never before. Due to such dynamic developments, employee creativity is achieving an amassed appreciation to an extent that it is labelled as the "holy grail" for making an organization truly innovative and thereby competitive (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014; Sung, Antefelt & Choi, 2017; To, Fisher, Ashkanasy, & Rowe, 2012). This industry has a core objective of maintaining the competitive advantage through generation of new and creative ideas, products and services, which is clearly propagated through their core values, objectives and mission statements.

The research on employee creativity in past decade criticized the practice of treating the concept as unitary in nature (Sung et al., 2017). Reasons behind the criticisms are multifold (Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Unsworth, 2001). Furthermore the individuals have personality differences and they work on dissimilar tasks with different work orientations making creativity a unitary variable as an unrealistic one (Sung et al., 2017). This study, therefore, treats creativity as a multi-faceted construct and works on the Unsworth's creativity typology (2001) by studying the proactive creativity. Proactive creativity occurs when individuals keenly and willingly search for opportunities and generate ideas to address the problems they figure out themselves and furthermore make suggestions for improvements even when there is no specific problem at hand to solve (Sung et al., 2017; Unsworth, 2001). Moreover proactive creativity is relevant to the scope of this study and adequately fulfills the purpose because the dynamism in the ICT sector requires the professionals to be proactively creative to survive and outshine the competition.

This growth spurt and changing scenarios in the ICT arena necessitated the players to be more creative and innovative yet by holding customer orientation close to heart. Services-based organizations need to focus completely on enhancing their innovative capabilities by putting customer in the core of its competitiveness (Deshpande, Farley & Webster, 1993; Tajjedini, 2010). Customer orientation is a well-established enabler of innovation in the literature which in turn is measured by the general innovativeness of the firm (Wang, Zhao & Voss, 2016).

Tajjedini (2010) studied customer orientation and innovativeness of service employees in the hospitality industry. He recommended to expand his study in other service-oriented industries and particularly investigate the link of creativity with innovativeness. The concept of innovativeness despite of its importance in service industries, still is in infancy stage as far as empirical studies are concerned. Therefore more attention is needed to get meaningful insights of the domain. To enhance the understanding of the impact customer orientation of employees on the innovative capability of the service providing firms, different intervening factors need to be investigated. In a technology-driven industry like ICT, role of certain enabling factors can be quite different as compared to industries with a low technology dependency (Wang et al., 2016; Pekovic & Rolland, 2016) and therefore makes the basis of studying proactive creativity of employees as an intervening factor.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are two-fold;

1. To develop a new instrument for measuring the construct of 'proactive creativity'
2. To study mediating impact of proactive creativity, if any, on the relationship between customer-orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness.

Research Questions

Following research questions are derived from the above objectives;

1. Is there a positive relation between customer orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness?

2. Is there a positive relation between customer orientation of service employees and proactive creativity?
3. Is there positive relation between proactive creativity and organizational innovativeness?
4. Is the relationship between customer orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness mediated by proactive creativity of the employees?

Hypotheses for the study

Following are the hypotheses proposed for the study;

H₁: There is a positive relation between customer orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness

H₂: There is a positive relation between customer orientation of service employees and proactive creativity.

H₃: There is positive relation between proactive creativity and organizational innovativeness.

H₄: Relationship between customer orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness is mediated by proactive creativity of the employees.

The preceding sections of the study discuss the supporting literature, followed by methodology, results, discussion of results, implications, limitations and future directions.

Literature Review

The customer orientation of service employees is referred to the importance given to customer's requirements and expectations by the employees of an organization (Liao & Subramony, 2008). It is an individual characteristic of an employee that is related to his/her job context which is an important predictor of perceptions of product and service quality, sales performance (Boles, Babin, Brashear & Brooks, 2001; Brady & Cronin, 2001; Brown, Mowen, Donavan & Licata, 2002). An organization that has employees with customer focus, continually engages in activities such as collecting, analyzing and processing information about customers and serves them by being proactively innovative (Al-alak & Tarabieh, 2011; Cheng & Krumwiede, 2011; Gebauer, Gustafsson & Witell, 2011).

The concept of creativity is holistic and multi-faceted which is enabled through different motivational drivers. Therefore it is not justified to measure it as a composite, unitary concept. Proactive creativity is the type of individual creativity which entails the process of idea generation that is ultimately an outcome of intrinsic motivation, spreading activation (i.e. multiple ideas identified and analyzed simultaneously), positive affect and self-discipline. The resulting products/services of proactive creativity have lasting value (Heinzen, 1999; Runco & Albert, 1990). Proactive creativity is internally driven and employees tend to go above and beyond their job requirements to be productive and perform their duties effectively. The concept of pro-social motivation can eloquently explain this phenomenon (Grant, 2008). Intrinsic motivation and creativity are found to be related but the relationship is proposed to be enhanced when other-focused psychological processes are included. One such 'other-focused psychological process' is

perspective taking. When employees involve in perspective-taking, they tend to cater to the needs and problems of those that can directly benefit from the products or services developed such as customers, co-workers, supervisors etc. (Grant & Berry, 2011). For instance, when an employee with intrinsic motivation to be creative generates novel ideas after considering the customer's perspective, he/she will likely to emphasize his/her attention and vigor on solving the customer's problems and needs. Therefore a customer-centric focus will enable employees to generate novel yet useful ideas that are satisfying a customer's need (Grant & Berry, 2011; Majdar & Ortiz-Walters, 2008; Sethi & Nicholson, 2001).

Personal initiative is a key feature of proactive creativity. It encompasses behaviour such as going beyond normal call of duty, proactivity, giving in extra energy and resources at one's job and overcoming obstacles in task completion (Frese & Fay, 2001). Many studies suggested that high proactivity may affect the relationship between creativity and innovation. It was further revealed that proactivity encourages the implementation of the ideas and strengthen the link between creativity and innovation adoption and its implementation (Frese, 2000; Zhou & Huang, 2017). This is widely acknowledge that an organization's ability to innovate is quite dependent upon the creativity of its employees (Amabile, 1988; Snell & Dean, 1992).

There are two different approaches to define organizational innovativeness. First one views it as behavioral in nature and is defines it as the adoption of innovation. Second one defines it as the willingness of an organization to change creativity is a distinct construct from innovation as it regards to coming up with a brilliant novel idea, whereas innovative capability is more about execution and implementation (Amabile et al., 1996). Unique idea generation by employees along with their implementation is a perquisite for an organization in order to be innovative, the unique ideas of its employees are needed to be utilized (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). Therefore it can be concluded that organizational innovativeness is encouraged by higher employee creativity (Tai & Mai, 2016). Thereby it can deduced that proactive creativity can enhance the organizational innovativeness.

Customer orientation of service employees can be defined as their tendency to give primary importance to the requirements and problems of the customers (Liao & Subramony, 2008; Zhou et al., 2009). A customer oriented service employee is more likely to be involved in perspective-taking of customers through which novel yet useful ideas can be generated (Grant & Berry, 2011). Perspective taking is a proactive act and leads to the proactive creativity which can be defined as the intrinsically-motivated and self-directed process of idea generation that are not only novel but are useful in catering to specific needs or problems (Heinzen, 1999). The organizational innovativeness is the readiness and capability of the organization to adopt new yet useful ideas which can increase the organizational performance and keep it ahead of the competition. The ideas generated as a result of proactive creativity are enduring in nature and can lead to improved organizational innovativeness because of their newness and usefulness (Bilgihan et al., 2011; Gomezelj & Gomezelj, 2016; Jimenez-Jimenez & Sanz-Valle, 2011; Krygidou & Spyropoulou, 2013; Ngo & O'Cass, 2013; Miller, 1988; Ren et al., 2010). An organization that is well-versed with its customer's present and future needs can only proactively sense, design and deliver the products fulfilling those needs. Such proactivity leads to improved organizational innovativeness.

In a hypercompetitive industry like ICT, where products and services evolves quickly, the only way for a firm to prosper as Grant (2010) very adequately pointed it out is to maintain an edge over its rivals. One of the major issues faced by the managers is the sustainability and

durability of the sources of competitive advantage (Ceglinski, 2016). As the industry is characterized by turbulence and unpredictability, there is a pressing need of faster response and flexibility (Grimm, Lee & Smith, 2006). Hi-tech industries such as information and communication technology call for an expanded paradigm to understand the attainment and sustainability of competitive advantage. The primitive and well known theories such as Resource-Based cannot explain the concept of competitive advantage in such hyper-competitive and hyper-velocity environments (Bourgeois & Eisenhardt, 1988; D’Aveni, 1995; Teece & Pisano, 1994). In such competitive environments there are major shifts in the technological, social and competitive domains which render the life span of competitive advantages attained by the firm short (Barreto, 2010).

Such challenges can be catered by firms by attaining unique and difficult to replicate dynamic capabilities. The theory of dynamic capabilities (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997; Teece, 2007) very adequately elaborates this phenomenon. “Dynamic” refers to the characteristics of the environment that are continuously changing and “Capability” refers to “the key role of strategic management in appropriately adapting, integrating and reconfiguring to the internal and external organization skills, resources and functional competencies towards changing environment” (Teece & Pisano, 1994, p. 1). Through this framework it can be understood that customer orientation of service employees is hard to replicate asset for a firm that can be channeled through individual creativity and translated into improved organizational innovativeness, which can serve as a true source of advantage for the ICT firms.

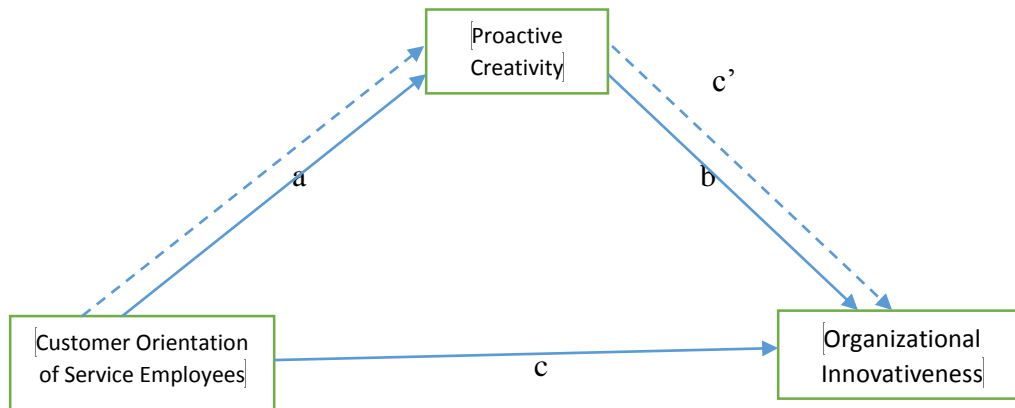


Figure 1. Theoretical Model

Method

The positivist paradigm is the basis of this study. Data was collected through questionnaire and employing the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The population for the study was Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector of Pakistan comprising of the IT/ITES (IT enabled services) and telecom sector of Pakistan. ICT professionals working at three different managerial tiers (Strategic, Tactical and Operational) were respondents of the study.

A total of 500 questionnaires were given out of which 354 were returned and 47 were not useable either because of the missing values or inappropriate filling of data. Therefore, the useable data of 307 respondents was achieved for further analysis.

Sample

According to Pakistan Software Board Export website (PSEB) there are a total of 110000 software professionals and 10,000 ICT professionals as per the official websites of telecom companies, working in Pakistan. Using the sample size formula by Yamane (1967, p.23) i.e. $n=N/(1+Ne^2)$, sample sizes were calculated for each strata. 400 questionnaires were sent to IT/ITeS professionals and 100 were sent to telecom professionals. A total of 31 respondents belonged to the top/strategic tier of management, 78 were of tactical and 252 were part of the operational tier of management. 73% of the sample comprised of male respondents and 27% were female respondents. 60.5% of the employees were of 30 years or less in age, 24.6% of respondent lies in the age bracket of 30-40 years, 13.3% in 40-50 years and 1.6% in 50 years and above. More than half of the respondents (53.7%) were unmarried.

Instrument

The following measures were utilized to assess the variables in the study.

Customer Orientation of Service Employees (COSE). To measure the construct of COSE, a short version of S.O.C.O (Selling-Orientation-Customer-Orientation) scale (Saxe & Weitz, 1982) was adapted and utilized for this study. The S.O.C.O scale (shortened version) is a 10-item scale that measures the selling orientation with five items and customer orientation with five items. Consistency of the response was checked using Cronbach's Alpha that was found to be 0.82

Proactive Creativity. After a comprehensive literature review, no relevant scale was found to measure the construct, therefore to fill the gap, a new scale was developed. The scale was developed on the basis of work of Churchill (1979), Hinkin (1995) and Hinkin, Tracy and Enz (1997). Deductive approach was used to generate items for the construct as relevant literature was available. Furthermore, to authenticate contextually and to validate the scale, 12 ICT professionals including software architects, telecom engineers, market research specialists, team leads and five assistant professors from the faculty of software and telecom engineering were requested to validate the scale. The scale was redefined on the basis of the valuable comments of the reviewers. Next step in the scale development is the content adequacy (Hinkins et al, 1997). This is an important step that ensures construct validity which utilizes expert review technique and factor analysis. The expert opinion was already sought to fine-tune the scale and in the later section results of the factor analysis are summarized. After the thorough examination of the creativity literature eight items were developed for proactive creativity.

For the purpose of scale development exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis are used so as to reduce the total number of items to the most relevant ones and to evaluate the overall factor structure of the model (Hinkins et al., 1997). Series of extractions resulted in reduction of items from eight to six for proactive creativity. The results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated a good fit of all the items developed on the construct. All the loadings are equal or greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2006) i.e. a=.60, b=0.67, c=.66, d=0.73, e=0.65, f=0.60.

Table 1

Results of confirmatory factor analysis

Indices	Model fit	Good level of fit criteria
P	0.012	>0.05
CMIN (Df)	2.341	<2
GFI	0.98	0.90
CFI	0.96	0.90
NFI	0.96	0.90
RMSEA	0.6	>0.8

Organizational Innovativeness. This study adapted the organizational innovative assessment scale (Wang & Ahmed, 2004) for the current study. Out of 20 items five items were dropped due to low factor loadings i.e. >0.50 Rests of the items of the scale were well meeting and/or exceeding the value and therefore retained as factor loadings were all above the threshold cutoff value..

Table 3 exhibits the descriptive statistics, Cronbach’s alpha reliabilities of the scales used in the study. All the reliabilities were above 0.70 (Nunally, 1978) showing that instruments are reliable for use. It further exhibits correlation results of all variables of the study which is significantly positive.

Table 2

Correlation, Cronbach’s alpha reliabilities & Descriptive Statistics

Variables	1	2	3	S.D	Mean
1. COSEP	<i>.82*</i>			.632	3.53
2. PCP	<i>.508**</i>	<i>.73*</i>		.633	3.37
3. OIP	<i>.421**</i>	<i>.394**</i>	<i>.88*</i>	.778	3.42

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Reliabilities are given diagonally in italics

Results

Table 3 shows the results of regression analysis to find the effect of customer orientation of service employees on organizational innovativeness. The value of R² is 0.18 which shows that 18% of the variation explained in organizational innovativeness is due to customer orientation of service employees. It is found the COSE is positively related with OI (β=0.42, t=8.1, p<0.05). The value of R² =0.26 shows that 26% of the change in proactive creativity is caused by customer orientation of service employees. It is furthermore found that COSE is positively related with proactive creativity β=0.51, t=10.31, p<0.05).

Table 3 further demonstrated that proactive creativity is positively related with organizational innovativeness (β=0.39, t=7.47, p<0.05). The value of R²= 0.155 shows that 15% of the change in organizational innovativeness is explained by proactive creativity.

Mediation results as depicted in the Table 3 revealed that the results of regression analysis between COSE and OI with the inclusion of a mediator i.e. proactive creativity. Results ($\beta=0.297$, $t=5.05$, $p<0.05$) shows that beta weights reduced from 0.42 to 0.29 and was found statistically significant thus demonstrating the partial mediation.

Table 3

Regression Results

Step	R	R ²	Beta	T	Sig.
Path c: COSE regressed on OI	.421	.177	.421	8.094	.000
Path a: COSE regressed on PC	.508	.258	.508	10.311	.000
Path b: PC regressed on OI	.394	.155	.394	7.475	.000
Path c': OI is regressed on COSE and PC	.469	.220	.297	5.055	.000

Conclusion and Discussion

There were two main objectives of the study. First was to develop a scale of proactive creativity and secondly to study if proactive creativity mediated the relation between customer orientation of service employees and the organizational innovativeness in ICT firms of Pakistan.

To fulfill the first objective of the study, a new scale was developed to measure the proactive creativity. There is quite a criticism by scholars on treatment of creativity as a uni-dimensional construct (Mumford & Gustafson, 1988; Unsworth, 2001) and is therefore called to be tested as multi-faceted. This study attempts to study a unique type of creativity i.e. 'proactive' by developing a new scale as there were none available and further more empirically testing its mediating role in a novel phenomenon that includes customer orientation and organizational innovativeness.

The second objective of the study was to study proactive creativity as a mediator between the relationship of customer orientation of service employees and organizational innovativeness. Proactive creativity partially mediated the relationship. The partial mediation symbolized that there are other factors present that need to be studied to translate the customer orientation of service employees into organizational innovativeness. Multiple studies (Gong, Huang & Farh, 2009; Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Im & Workman, 2004; Kim, Hon & Crant, 2009; Chen, 2016; Bodla & Naeem, 2014) studied the mediating role of creativity and creative processes.

The highly interactive and experimental nature of the service sector (such as ICT) puts customer orientation at a very critical position for the development of new products and services (Kim, 2009). The service activities demand the greater interaction among the service employees and customers (Schneider, 1980) because of the heterogeneous needs of the customers. This calls for high level of flexibility from service employees and tend to make their jobs unstructured to quite an extent (Sousa & Coelho, 2011). This explicit focus on customer needs require a greater deal of proactive and creative solutions from the end of service employees.

Creativity is well recognized driver of innovation. In the turbulent global market, proactive and creative efforts of companies enable them to develop dynamic capabilities (entrepreneurial, managerial or technical) that lead to enhancement of their innovativeness (Krygidou & Spyropoulou, 2013; Zhou & Hoever, 2014). There is an extensive consensus of scholar on the

notion of creativity as the key component of innovativeness (Amabile, 1997; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Tang, 1998). Mengue and Auh (2006) also signified the importance of proactivity in creative thinking to figure out new ways of doing business. Moreover Wang and Ahmed's (2004) definition of organizational innovativeness states it to be the thinking capability beyond what's normal and routine and going beyond obvious to discover newness.

The results indicate that the service employees who are customer oriented tend to be creative proactively and thus in turn, positively impact the organizational innovativeness. This is because service employees have to interact with their customers frequently and the more they are oriented towards understanding their expressed and unexpressed requirements, better they can serve them and help in developing innovative solutions (Sousa & Coelho, 2011).

Furthermore Despande, Farley and Webster (1993) suggest that the customer orientation can be associated with organizational innovativeness provided that there are enabling factors. Creativity is one potential enabler of innovation and results of this study also substantiate this claim. The ICT sector of Pakistan is one of the largest contributors in the national income.

Limitation & Future Research

Every research effort is confined to a scope and this scope limits in some or more ways. The data collected is cross-sectional in nature. A multi-wave data can give more insightful results. This was a self-report questionnaire that sought data from three management tiers (Top, Middle and tactical).

A dyadic sample (Supervisor-subordinate) sample can also yield different yet interesting results. Partial mediation also suggests that there are other factors (persona or contextual) that need to be tested as mediators to have a better picture of the scenario. The samples were ICT professionals of the Pakistan. Other industries can yield different findings. Cross-cultural studies can give interesting insights and the comparisons can be quite useful to understand the concepts discussed in the study. Lastly, a new scale was developed to measure the proactive creativity. It needs further testing for verification and generalization.

Overall, the study was insightful as a new scale was developed to study the under-researched type of creativity i.e. proactivity. Moreover, in a service-intensive industry, a very important yet under-studied phenomenon of customer orientation along with proactive creativity was studied.

References

- Al-alak, B. A., & Tarabieh, S. A. (2011). Gaining competitive advantage and organizational performance through customer orientation, innovation differentiation and market differentiation. *International Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, 1(5), 80-91.
- Anderson, N., Potočnik, K., & Zhou, J. (2014). Innovation and creativity in organizations: A state-of-the-science review, prospective commentary, and guiding framework. *Journal of Management*, 40(5), 1297-1333.
- Amabile, T. M. (1988). A model of creativity and innovation in organizations. *Research in organizational behavior*, 10(1), 123-167.
- Amabile, T.M. (1997). 'Motivating creativity in organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do', *California Management Review*, 40 (1): 39-58.
- Ameen, K., & Gorman, G. E. (2009). Information and digital literacy: a stumbling block to development? A Pakistan perspective. *Library Management*, 30(1/2), 99-112.
- Barreto, I. (2010). Dynamic capabilities: A review of past research and an agenda for the future. *Journal of management*, 36(1), 256-280.
- Bilgihan, A., Okumus, F., & Kwun, D. J. W. (2011). Information technology applications and competitive advantage in hotel companies. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 2(2), 139-154.
- Bodla, M. A., & Naeem, B. (2014). Creativity as mediator for intrinsic motivation and sales performance. *Creativity Research Journal*, 26(4), 468-473.
- Boles, J. S., Babin, B. J., Brashear, T. G., & Brooks, C. (2001). An examination of the relationships between retail work environments salesperson selling orientation-customer orientation and job performance. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9, 1-13.
- Bourgeois III, L. J., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (1988). Strategic decision processes in high velocity environments: Four cases in the microcomputer industry. *Management science*, 34(7), 816-835.
- Brady, M. K., & Cronin, J. J. (2001). Customer orientation: Effects on customer service perceptions and outcome behaviors. *Journal of Service Research*, 3, 241-251.
- Brown, T. J., Mowen, J. C., Donovan, R., & Licata, J. W. (2002). The customer orientation of service workers: Personality trait effects on self-and supervisor performance ratings. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39, 110-119.
- Cegliński, P. (2016). The concept of competitive advantages. Logic, sources and durability. *Journal of Positive Management*, 7(3), 57.
- Chang, S., Jia, L., Takeuchi, R., & Cai, Y. (2014). Do high-commitment work systems affect creativity? A multilevel combinational approach to employee creativity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(4), 665.

- Chassagnon, V., Haned, N., & Le Bas, C. (2016). The determinants of organisational creativity methods: an empirical study based on a french survey. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 20(04), 1640003.
- Chen, B. B. (2016). The Creative Self-Concept as a Mediator between Openness to Experience and Creative Behaviour. *Creativity. Theories–Research-Applications*, 3(2), 408-417.
- Cheng, C. C., & Krumwiede, D. (2011). The effects of market orientation on new service performance: the mediating role of innovation. *International Journal of Services Technology and Management*, 16(1), 49-73.
- Churchill Jr, G. A. (1979). A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of marketing research*, 64-73.
- Deshpande, R., Farley, J., Webster, F. (1993), Corporate culture, customer orientation and innovativeness in Japanese firms: a quardard analysis, *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), pp. 23-38
- D'aveni, R. A. (1995). Coping with hypercompetition: Utilizing the new 7S's framework. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 9(3), 45-57.
- Economic Pakistan. (2008, Feburary 14). *Economic Pakistan*. Retrieved December 13, 2015, from Wordpress.com: <https://economicpakistan.wordpress.com/2008/02/14/it-industry/>
- Gebauer, H., Gustafsson, A., & Witell, L. (2011). Competitive advantage through service differentiation by manufacturing companies. *Journal of Business Research*, 64, 1270-1280.
- Gomezelj, D. O., & Gomezelj, D. O. (2016). A systematic review of research on innovation in hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(3), 516-558.
- Gong, Y., Huang, J. C., & Farh, J. L. (2009). Employee learning orientation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity: The mediating role of employee creative self-efficacy. *Academy of management Journal*, 52(4), 765-778.
- Grant, A. M., & Parker, S. K. (2009). 7 redesigning work design theories: the rise of relational and proactive perspectives. *Academy of Management annals*, 3(1), 317-375.
- Grimm, C. M., Lee, H., Smith, K. G. (2006), Strategy as action. Competitive dynamics and competitive advantage, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Gumusluoglu, L., & Ilsev, A. (2009). Transformational leadership, creativity, and organizational innovation. *Journal of business research*, 62(4), 461-473.
- Hacklin, F., Marxt, C., & Fahrni, F. (2009). Coevolutionary cycles of convergence: An extrapolation from the ICT industry. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 76(6), 723-736.
- Hinkin, T. R. (1995). A review of scale development practices in the study of organizations. *Journal of management*, 21(5), 967-988.

- Hinkin, T. R., Tracey, J. B., & Enz, C. A. (1997). Scale construction: Developing reliable and valid measurement instruments. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 21(1), 100-120.
- Im, S., & Workman Jr, J. P. (2004). Market orientation, creativity, and new product performance in high-technology firms. *Journal of marketing*, 68(2), 114-132.
- Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Sanz-Valle, R. (2011). Innovation, organizational learning, and performance. *Journal of business research*, 64(4), 408-417.
- Kim, G. S., (2017). The Relationships Between Innovation Orientation, Customer Orientation, Service Quality, and Business Performance. In: Tan C., Goh T. (eds) *Theory and Practice of Quality and Reliability Engineering in Asia Industry*. Springer, Singapore
- Kim, W. (2009). Customers' Responses to Customer Orientation of Service Employees in Full-Service Restaurants: A Relational Benefits Perspective. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 10(3), 153-174.
- Kim, T. Y., Hon, A. H., & Crant, J. M. (2009). Proactive personality, employee creativity, and newcomer outcomes: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 24(1), 93-103.
- Kyrgidou, L. P., & Spyropoulou, S. (2013). Drivers and performance outcomes of innovativeness: an empirical study. *British Journal of Management*, 24(3), 281-298.
- Liao, H., & Subramony, M. (2008). Employee customer orientation in manufacturing organizations: Joint influences of customer proximity and the senior leadership team. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93, 317–328.
- Lumpkin, G.T. & Dess, G.G. (1996). 'Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Orientation Construct and Linking It to Performance', *Academy of Management Review*, 21 (1): 135-72.
- Madjar, N., & Ortiz-Walters, R. 2008. Customers as contributors and reliable evaluators of creativity in the service industry. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 29: 949-966.
- Menguc, B. & Auh, S. (2006). 'Creating a firm-level dynamic capability through capitalizing on market orientation and innovativeness', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34 (1): 15527824.
- Miller, D. (1988). Relating Porter's business strategies to environment and structure: Analysis and performance implications. *Academy of management Journal*, 31(June), 280-308.
- Mumford, M. D., & Gustafson, S. B. (1988). Creativity syndrome: Integration, application, and innovation. *Psychological bulletin*, 103(1), 27.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ngo, L. V., & O'Cass, A. (2013). Innovation and business success: The mediating role of customer participation. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8), 1134-1142.
- Pekovic, S., & Rolland, S. (2016). Customer orientation and firm's business performance: a moderated mediation model of environmental customer innovation and contextual factors. *European Journal of Marketing*, 50(12)

- Ren, L., Xie, G., & Krabbendam, K. (2010). Sustainable competitive advantage and marketing innovation within firms: A pragmatic approach for Chinese firms. *Management Research Review*, 33(1), 79-89.
- Saxe, R., & Weitz, B. A. (1982). The SOCO scale: A measure of the customer orientation of salespeople. *Journal of marketing research*, 343-351.
- Schneider, B. (1980). The service organization: climate is crucial. *Organizational dynamics*, 9(2), 52-65.
- Sousa, C. M., & Coelho, F. (2011). From personal values to creativity: evidence from frontline service employees. *European Journal of Marketing*, 45(7/8), 1029-1050.
- Sung, S. Y., Antefelt, A., & Choi, J. N. (2017). Dual effects of job complexity on proactive and responsive creativity: Moderating role of employee ambiguity tolerance. *Group & Organization Management*, 42(3), 388-418.
- Tai, H. T., Mai, N. Q., (2016). Proactive personality, organizational context, employee creativity and innovative capability: Evidence from MNCs and domestic corporations. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 24(3), 370-389.
- Tajeddini, K. (2010). Effect of customer orientation and entrepreneurial orientation on innovativeness: Evidence from the hotel industry in Switzerland. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 221-231.
- Tang, H. K. (1998). An integrative model of innovation in organizations. *Technovation*, 18(5), 297-309.
- Teece, D. J. (2007). Explicating dynamic capabilities: the nature and microfoundations of (sustainable) enterprise performance. *Strategic management journal*, 28(13), 1319-1350.
- Teece, D., & Pisano, G. (1994). The dynamic capabilities of firms: an introduction. *Industrial and corporate change*, 3(3), 537-556.
- Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic management journal*, 509-533.
- To, M. L., Fisher, C. D., Ashkanasy, N. M., & Rowe, P. A. (2012). Within-person relationships between mood and creativity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3), 599.
- Wang, C. L., & P. K. Ahmed. 2004. The development and validation of the organisational innovativeness construct using confirmatory factor analysis. *European Journal of Innovation Management* 7 (4): 303–13.
- Wang, Q., Wang, Z., Zhao, X., 2015. Strategic orientations and mass customization capability: the moderating effect of product life cycle. *International Journal of Production Research*, 53(17), 5278-5295.
- Wang, Q., Zhao, X., & Voss, C. (2016). Customer orientation and innovation: A comparative study of manufacturing and service firms. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 171, 221-230.
- Unsworth, K. (2001). Unpacking creativity. *Academy of management review*, 26(2), 289-297.

Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis*, 2nd Edition, New York: Harper and Row.

Zhou, J., & Hoever, I. J. (2014). Research on workplace creativity: A review and redirection. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, 1(1), 333-359.

Zhou, J., & Huang, J. C. (2017). Human resource systems, employee creativity, and firm innovation: The moderating role of firm ownership. *Academy of Management Journal*, 60(3), 1164-1188.

Zhou, J., & Shalley, C. E. (2003). Research on employee creativity: A critical review and directions for future research. In *Research in personnel and human resources management* (pp. 165-217). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.