Spirit and Innovation at Work in Software Houses of Pakistan: How Does Job Satisfaction Intervene the Relationship?

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Abstract

The study in hand is an effort to find the relationship of spirit at work with Innovative work behavior of employees using job satisfaction as mediator. The data was collected from employees of software houses of Punjab province through self-administered questionnaire. We distributed 560 questionnaires among which 361 questionnaires were received filled thus making response rate 67.3%. This study employs confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the overall fitness of measurement and structural model using AMOS graphic. The results of the study revealed that spirit at work had a positive effect on innovative work behavior of employees. It is proved through results that job satisfaction has mediating effect on the relationship between Spirit at work and IWB. Job satisfaction demonstrated three dimensions of spirit at work to be mediated. However, Job satisfaction does not mediate the relation of spiritual connection and Innovative work behavior. As the employees are the integral part and most important asset of the organization so managers should focus on maintaining and lifting up the level of spirit at work among employees. This high level of spirit at work will help employees to show more innovative behavior that assists organizations to grow.

Keywords: Spirit at Work, Job Satisfaction, Innovative Work Behavior

Introduction

21st century is the era of globalization, where demand for business world is reshaping due to competiveness. This dynamic environment has forced the managers to manage their resources effectively in order to get end results. Now, it's a challenging task for the organizations to be competitive in this period where organizations perform well in all aspects to attain and sustain competitive positioning. Organizations are using different resources; technology, economies of scale and other natural resources to cope with prevailing current challenging issues in order to get success in their business. But among all the resources the most important and unique resource for the organizations is human resource due to its special features. Human capital of the organization is the strategic resource which provides the sustainable and competitive positioning to survive in a rapidly changing environment (Teece, 1997; Grant, 1996). According to L. A. Witt et al. (2002) employees are the most important asset of the organization for its prosperity and success. Organizations depend upon their employee's innovative behavior at workplaces to respond quickly and aggressively to different market changes (Tajeddini & Trueman, 2008). Different organizational leaders focused and identified that it is very important to promote the "innovative behavior" among employees (Jong & Hartog, 2007). Many researchers had studied the relationship of Innovative work behavior with different variables but a little focus was given to the association of Innovative behavior with workplace spirituality. It's very important for managers to identify the reasons that why employees respond dif-

ferently while enjoying the same level of facilities at work from the organization. Probably, workplace spirituality can help to understand that why employees have different state of mind. Spirit at work is a human necessity for many individuals that's why organizations should not ignore this (Hart & Brady, 2005). Many researchers has attracted towards organizational spirituality, as it is considered as a new area of organizational behavior (Sorizehi, Kamalipur, Keramat, Qhalandarzehi, & Jamshidzehi, June 2014).

The study on spirituality has become a salient issue in both empirical and scientific studies. Globalization hike is reasonably cause of many observed workplace changes and raised variant issues; dissatisfaction of employees, employee turnover and downsizing and so on, because of mergers and acquisitions of different national and multinational companies. To deal with these dynamic demands, employees need to exert extra effort to complete the different tasks related to their job. Employees feel stressed when they are required to perform a plenty of work within a specific time period. To get out of this stressed situation, employees need to be creative and innovative so that a lot of work can be managed efficiently in a well-designed manner. Now, employees consider their workplaces as a place of living rather than a place where they only earn bread and butter. Those organizations which endorse a spiritual dimension, are well aware with the reality that every employee have mind and spirit. They seek purpose and meaning in their work and they desire to connect with other employees and be a part of their social community. Innovativeness is becoming necessary in every field of life that's why this topic needs to be studied in different aspects. The main endeavor behind this study was to cover up the gap of existing literature as scant literature is available on the relationship between spirit at work and Innovative work behavior specifically in Pakistani context. On the other hand job satisfaction has not been investigated in software employees as a mediator between the association of spirit at work and innovative work behavior. So, one of the job attitude, job satisfaction, was used as a mediator in this study.

Literature Review

Spirit at work

Current dominant and profitable Organizations need that organizational culture which can integrate employee's core values with the organization's core values to maintain wellbeing of their employees. Spirit at work was defined by (Kinjerski, Val, & Skrypnek, 2006) in their empiricalgrounded work as follows, "Spirit at work is a distinct state that is characterized by cognitive, interpersonal, spiritual, and mystical dimensions namely (1) engaging work characterized by a profound feeling of well-being, a belief that one is engaged in meaningful work that has a higher purpose, an awareness of alignment between one's values and beliefs and one's work, and a sense of being authentic; (2) a mystical experience characterized by a positive state of energy, a sense of exactness, transcendence, and experiences of joy and bliss (3) a spiritual connection characterized by a feeling of connectedness to others and common purpose". Spirit is "the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others and the entire universe as everybody and everything is interrelated and has a reason" (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

Gull & Jonathan (2004) stated that individuals perform better and make contribution more enthusiastically toward an enhanced feeling at their workplace when they feel connected and meaningful at their organization. Carrette & King (2005) argued that "spirituality has become the 'brand label' for the search of meaning, values, transcendence, hope and connectedness in modern societies. Employees who work for organizations they consider being spiritual, are fearless, creative more ethical, satisfied and more committed".

It was stated in the studies of Dehaghi *et al.* (2012) that the deep sense of being help people to show positive behavior and it is that state which can offer people with something important in their lives, sense of fulfillment, support inner satisfaction, sense of connectedness with others, universe or something remarkable. The element of vitality or spirit encourages people for serving others irrespective of the obstacles they encountered during it.

Innovative work behavior

Farr & Ford (1990) stated that Innovative work behavior is commonly defined in the perspective of how employees can facilitate the success of the intentional introduction and initiation of new and benefical ideas, products or processes. According to Jong et al. (2007) "IWB is recognition of problems and intentional introduction of new and useful ideas, as well as the set of behaviors needed to develop, launch, and implement ideas with an aim to enhance personal and/or business performance". New and useful ideas are not build on a straight line process but it's a complex and multistage process which includes idea generation, combination building and finally the implementation step (Scott & Bruce, 1994). According to Parker et al. (2006) Individuals who are able and willing to innovate, they go beyond the boundaries of their job requirements and at the same moment they grasp a nonstop stream of innovative ideas. A positive association was found between innovative work behavior and effectiveness of telling stories (D'Arrigo et al., 2017). As stated by Jong et al. (2007) "IWB is recognition of problems and initiation and intentional introduction of new and useful ideas, as well as the set of behaviors needed to develop, launch, and implement ideas with an aim to enhance personal and/or business performance". Innovative behavior varies from employee to employee because it depends upon the imagination through which they concentrate on generating new thoughts (King et al. 2002). A significant connection was found between perceived organizational support fit and IWB by Afsar et al., (2018). It was described by Mumford et al. (1988) that creativity is a starting point of novel, different, new and valuable ideas. Messmann et al., (2017) also suggested a statistically significant effects of psychological empowerment on IWB. Whereas according to Scott and Bruce (1994) innovative work behavior combines a procedure of recognition, improvement, modification and implementation of those thoughts.

Innovative work behavior and Spirit at work

A close inspection of literature propose that employee's creativity is fostered by workplace spirituality(Milliman et al., 2003) specially, when nurtured along with the organizational support's perception (Afsar & Rehman, 2015). Workplace spirit assists to develop positive purpose as well as direction that encourages creativity (Afsar & Rehman, 2015). Individuals try to be engaged in innovative cognitive thoughts with the help of spiritual feelings (Gupta *et al.*, 2014). Atitumpong and Badir (2017) proved that learning orientation has a positive relationship with IWB among employees. Afsar and Rehman (2017) found a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and innovative work behaviors.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is immensely studied and discussed topic from last 40 years. Many researcher and practitioners studied this topic with different variables. Job satisfaction is one of extensively studied organizational behavior and it is an attitudinal response of employees towards their job (Currivan, 2000). Locke (1978) has defined job satisfaction in his wordings as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or his experience at work". According to Andrisani (1978) "Job satisfaction is an employee's overall evaluation of the job or specific components or tasks associated with job." Wrzesniewski (2003) stated that the individuals who get significance and meaning from their work duties, they experience higher job satisfaction than other workers. Brown (1992) analyzed that individual's satisfaction with their organization has its roots in sense of community.

In an empirical study by Milliman *et al.*'s, (2003), it was argued that employees' inner work satisfaction related to significance of work and feeling of community. Furthermore, Chawla & Guda (2010) empirically proved that spirit at work and job satisfaction has a positive relationship among sales specialist.

Hypotheses

H1: Spirit at work is significantly correlated with Innovative Work Behavior.

H2: Job satisfaction is significantly correlated with innovative work behavior.

H3a: Job Satisfaction intervenes the relationship between Engaging Work and Innovative Work Behavior.

H3b: Job Satisfaction intervenes the relationship between Mystical Experience and Innovative Work Behavior.

Hc: Job Satisfaction intervenes the relationship between Spiritual Connection and Innovative Work Behavior.

H3d: Job Satisfaction intervenes the relationship between Sense of Community and Innovative Work Behavior.

Conceptual Model

On the basis of previous literature, a conceptual model was developed. This study was a quantitative study as according to the *Christensen* (1993) it is most appropriate technique when the purpose behind the study is to clarify the relationship between variables of the study. The proposed model (Figure 1) of this study consisted of three variables, where spirit at work was an independent variable, job satisfaction was mediating variable and innovative work behavior was dependent variable.



Figure 1: Theoretical Model

Research Methods and Data Collection

It was deductive, quantitative and cross sectional study as data was collected one time only. For data collection purpose, stratified random sampling technique was applied for this study. The software houses in Pakistan were divided into strata according to the nature of their services. Then randomly different software houses were approached for data collection purpose so that data can be collected from each type of software house. The data was collected through survey instrument

(structured questionnaire). As according to the Gable (1994) these are specifically designed because the theoretical constructs can be measured accurately, data can be collected rapidly, data can be broadly analyzed by using thorough statistical techniques and complex relationships can be examined quantitatively. There were 560 questionnaires distributed among different software houses through email and personal visits. The respondents were given three days' time to fill these questionnaires. We received total 361 questionnaires which was useful for the sample of the study. The response rate of questionnaires was 67.3% which was quite comprehensive for this study. All the employees voluntarily participated and anonymity with confidentiality was assured to them. The employees of software industry were selected as respondents because they had direct interaction with each other and work in teams. Among 361 respondents there were 288(79.8%) males and remaining 73 (20.2%) were females. The percentage of male respondents shows that male employees are dominant in this industry as compared to females. Majority of the respondents 193 (53.5%) were part of 25-35 age group which shows that all of them are at the mid of their careers whereas 133 (36.8%) were below 25 which were new entrants to this industry. Work experience showed that 208 (57.6%) respondents have less than 2 years' experience and 122 (33.8%) individuals have 2-5 years' experience while remaining 31 (8.6%) have more than 6 years' experience.

Measurements

Different scales were used to measure the variables of the study. Nevertheless all the measurements were adapted from previous literature for maintaining construct's reliability and validity. Mean and standard deviation is given in Table 2. Each variable was constructed by computing the mean of the items comprising the scale.

Spirit at work: Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) 18 items scale was used to measure the independent variable spirit at work. The questions were arranged at a five point likert scale which ranges from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree and respondents were asked to rate their answers on it. Exemplary items are "I experience a match between the requirements of my work and my values, beliefs and behaviors." and "At times, I experience a 'high' at my work." The scale was used by (Kinjerski & Skrypne (2008) and the reliability results were (Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.93).

Job Satisfaction: The mediating variable job satisfaction was measured through 15 items scale of Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979). Both intrinsic and extrinsic job features were intended to cover in this scale and respondents were asked to rate their answers regarding these attributes at a five point likert scale which ranges from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. This scale was also utilized by Nahar, Hossain, Rahman, and Bairagi (2013) and it was reliable at (∞ =.85). A few items include "I am satisfied with my fellow workers." and "I am satisfied with the amount of responsibility I am given."

Innovative work Behavior: A 9 items scale by Janssen (2000) used to study the innovative work behavior. Respondents were asked to rate their answers regarding IWB at a five point likert scale which ranges from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Hsiao, Chang, Tu, and Chen, (May 2011) used this scale in their study and found it reliable at (∞ = .91). Some of the exemplary items are "I search out new technologies, processes, working methods, techniques, and/or product ideas." and "I make organizational members enthusiastic (excited, passionate) for innovative ideas."

Results

Data was analyzed by applying Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using AMOS 22. To check the correlation or association among variables, Pearson correlation was used in this study as suggested by Zou *et al.* (2003) to find the relationships. The results of correlation are given in Table 1. According to the results, all variables have positive and significant relationship with each other. Engaging work (EW) has significant and positive relation with ME (r=0.757), SC (r=0.638), SoC

(r=0.739), JS (r=0.844) and IWB (r=0.523). Mystical experience has significant and positive relation with SC (r=0.675), SoC (r=0.678), JS (r=0.765) and IWB (r=0.454). Spiritual connectivity has significant and positive relation with SoC (r=0.597), JS (r=0.596) and IWB (r=0.238). Sense of Community has positive and significant relationship with JS (r=0.761) and IWB (r=0.493). Job Satisfaction has positive and significant relationship with IWB (r=0.395).

	EW	ME	SC	SoC	JS	IWB
Engaging Work	1					
Mystical Experience	.757***	1				
Spiritual Connection	.638***	.675***	1			
Sense of Community			.597***	1		
Job Satisfaction				.761***	1	
Innovative Work Behaviour	.523***	.454***	.238***	.493***	.395***	1

Table 1. Pearson Correlations for the variables

***significance level of Correlation is 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

To perform SEM, Amos 22 was used. In the first step measurement model was made which showed the extent to which observed factors are connected to their particular latent or unobserved factors. In the second step SEM is prepared that showed the impact of exogenous latent variables on some other specific latent factors of study. SEM make it easy to test the entire complex hypothetical frame in one step as investigating and testing each variable and component one by one as performed in regression and multi regression analysis.



Figure 2: Measurement Model

Measurement Model

To test the factorial validity of all the variables in this study, overall fitness of the model was tested by applying CFA in Amos 22 through structural equation model. The fitted path diagram for the variables is shown in (Figure 2), latent variables are represented by circles and observed variables are represented by rectangles. Error terms were also included to all observed variables. At

first step, convergent validity has evaluated by calculating factor loadings (λ), which should be statistically significant and greater than the minimum threshold that is 0.35 as suggested by Hair *et al.* (1998). It was stated by Hair *et al.* (1998) that the factor loadings above 0.35 have practical significance. The values of factor loadings given in Table 2 are according to the criteria. Cronbach alpha was also calculated to test the reliability and it should not be less than 0.70, but more than 0.80 is seen as more reliable (Cronbach, 1951). The measurement model was good fit as CMIN/DF was 1.621, CFI was .925, GFI was .885, AGFI was .864, and RMSEA was .042.

Constructs	Measurement	Mean	SD	Standard	CR
	Items			loadings	
Engaging	EW1	3.79	.799	.609	0.859
work	EW2	3.95	.816	.647	
	EW3	4.18	.762	.676	
	EW5	3.98	.886	.521	
	EW6	4.04	.790	.516	
	EW7	3.64	.991	.556	
Mystical Ex-	ME10	3.61	.983	.682	
perience	ME11	3.80	.927	.789	
	ME12	3.72	.876	.572	
	SC13	3.56	.880	.661	
Spiritual con-	SC14	3.66	.964	.800	
nection	SC15	3.68	.967	.798	
Sense of	SoC16	3.64	.962	.654	
community	SoC17	3.92	.862	.819	
	SoC18	3.89	.845	.765	
Job Satisfac-	JS1	3.65	.941	.450	0.882
tion	JS2	3.85	.920	.616	
	JS3	3.97	.852	.577	
	JS4	3.81	.890	.649	
	JS6	3.85	.919	.618	
	JS8	3.72	.918	.599	
	JS9	3.70	.930	.571	
	JS10	3.49	.904	.654	
	JS11	3.49	.901	.652	
	JS12	3.54	.939	.555	
	JS14	3.71	.923	.641	
	JS15	3.65	1.003	.449	
Innovative	IWB2	3.77	.891	.503	0.849
work beha-	IWB3	3.83	.750	.527	
vior	IWB4	3.68	.835	.665	
	IWB5	3.57	.873	.684	
	IWB6	3.60	.821	.713	
	IWB7	3.61	.803	.676	
	IWB8	3.56	.773	.611	
	IWB9	3.62	.808	.626	

Table: 2 Mean, Standard Deviation, Factor Loadings and Reliability Analysis

Structural Model

After getting the good fit measurement model, a basic model was prepared in the light of past hypothetical arguments. To test this model various GOF was used. The estimates of hypothesized structural model were as CMIN/DF 1.576, CFI .935, GFI .900, AGFI .879, and RMSEA .040.



Figure 3: Structural Equation Model

The results of structural model are presented in Table 3. These results were obtained by using standardized path coefficients and these results show the relationship between latent variables. According to the results the H1 is supported that all the dimensions of spirit at work has significant direct relationship with innovative work behavior. That means employees spirit at work effects on their innovative work behavior. Only direct hypothesis results are discussed in Table 3.

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	Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E.	Р	Label
H1	EW> Inn_Work	.38.9	.073	***	Supported
	SOC>Inn_Work	.207	.045	***	
	ME> Inn_Work	.198	.053	***	
	SC> Inn_Work	160	.036	***	

Table 3: Regression Weights:

Mediation Analysis

For mediation analysis firstly direct effects of independent variable (SAW) on dependent variable (IWB) and indirect effects of independent variable (SAW) on dependent variable (IWB) with the help of mediating variable (JS) are studied.

	ME	SC	SOC	EW	Job_Sat
Job_Sat	.252**	.031(NS)	.321*	.422**	.000
Inn_Work	.271**	.272**	.302**	.411*	.187***

Note: *significance level 0.01 (2-tailed), ** significance level 0.05 (2 -tailed), ***significance level 0.10 (2-tailed), (NS=Not significant).

	ME	SC	SOC	EW	Job_Sat	
Job_Sat	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
Inn_Work	.047***	.006(NS)	060***	.079***	.000	

Table 5: Standardized Indirect Effects

Note: *significance level 0.01 (2-tailed), ** significance level 0.05 (2-tailed), ***significance level 0.10 (2-tailed) (NS_Not significant)

***significance level 0.10 (2-tailed), (NS=Not significant).

The values of structural model were according to the thresholds. The bootstrapping strategy was used to test the mediation result. Bootstrapping is a resampling strategy in which different sampling distributions are form to estimate the standard errors and to create confidence intervals. It's important to check the true results of mediation. The direct path of mediating variable with dependent variable is significant that is the basic condition of mediational effect. On the other hand, indirect effect was also significant. So, on the basis of threshold the mediation effect of job satisfaction between independent variables and IWB is explained below:

Hypotheses	Direct Beta w/o	Direct Beta	Indirect Be-	Mediation Type Ob-			
	Med	w/Med	ta	served			
EW-JS-IWB	0.31*	0.411*	0.079***	Partial Mediation			
ME-JS-IWB	0.16**	0.271**	0.047***	Partial Mediation			
SC-JS-IWB	0.16*	0.272*	0.006(ns)	No Mediation			
SoC-JS-IWB	0.17*	0.302*	.060***	Partial Mediation			

Table 6: Inference for Mediation

Note: *significance level 0.01 (2-tailed), ** significance level 0.05 (2 -tailed),

***significance level 0.10 (2-tailed), (NS=Not significant).

Discussion and Conclusion

According to the results all dimensions have significant relation with IWB. The hypotheses are discussed below:

The first hypothesis H1 explains the relationship of spirit at work with Innovative work behavior. Spirit at work is comprised of four dimensions and all were studied. These four dimensions are individually studied with Innovative work behavior. The results of four dimensions are used to explain the main variable.

According to the individual results of each dimension, the correlation values are (r= .523, p< .01), (r = .454, p< .01), (r = .238, p< .01) and (r = .493 p < .01) respectively, which indicates that EW, ME, SC, and SoC have positive relationship with IWB. Whereas the Beta values of EW, ME, SC, and SoC are β = 0.411, p < .01, β = 0.272, p < .01, β =0.302, p< .01 and β = 0.262, p < .01 respectively. These regression estimates obtained from SEM shows that all the independent variables have significant and direct relationship with IWB. The above mentioned results show that overall spirit at work is directly and significantly related to IWB. As construed by Krishnakumar and Neck, (2002) employees who are high in spirit at work, they are more satisfied with their work and also creative in their jobs which in turn increased their performance. It was discussed in the above literature that employees who perceives their work meaningful they work with more devotion as compare to others.

To explain the relationship of mediating variable 'Job satisfaction' and dependent variable 'innovative work behavior' H2 was formed. The results shows positive relationship as the value of

correlation coefficient is (r = .395, p < .01). The regression estimates ($\beta = .187, p < .05$) obtained from SEM indicates that job satisfaction has direct and significant relation with IWB. According to Jong & Hartog (2007) those employees exhibit innovative behavior more often who feel intrinsically motivated. Fredrickson (2001) explained in his theory of positive emotions that when people feel great at their jobs they are naturally persuaded to explore new things in unique ways. This is important for the employees of software houses to involve in continuous innovation because innovation is necessary in this field.

To test the mediating effect of Job satisfaction between SAW and IWB four hypotheses H3a, H3-b, H3-c and H3-d are formed. According to the β values given in Table 6 there is a significant direct relation between Independent variable and mediating variable and indirect values indicate that there is a partial mediation between the relation of EW, ME, and SoC with IWB. But there is no mediation between the relationship of SC and IWB.

The aim of the study was to examine the impact of spirit at work on innovative behavior of employees with the help of job satisfaction. The results of the study proved that spirit at work has positive impact on innovative behavior directly and also indirectly through job satisfaction. Results are consistence with the findings of Afsar and Rehman (2017; 2015) which enhance the generalizability of the study. According to (Trott, 1996) the employees who have strong associations with their colleagues and other people at work, which is basic factor of gatherings, are more willing to learn new things and more unwilling to experience burnout at work. It is explained in the "Broaden-and-Built theory of Positive Emotions" (Fredrickson B. L., 2001) that emotions like joy, interest and happiness are positive emotions and these positive emotions increases awareness level and boosts individuals for novel, varied and exploratory thoughts and actions. The positive emotions broaden the momentary thought action repertoire of an individual; joy sparks urge to play, interest sparks urge to explore, contentment sparks urge to integrate and love sparks a recurring cycle of each of these urges within safe, close relationships.

This study provides different findings for the management of software houses and other organizations as innovation is important for all organizations. The spiritual values of employees play an important role in their personal development and management should pay intention on enhancing the spiritual values among their employees. As we found in the study that spiritual values has positive relation with innovative behavior of employees. And the success of software industry specially depends on innovation level. So managers should identify, how they can increase this spirit among employees.

As the time passes, the level of skills and resources are enhanced by this broadened behavioral repertoire. Employees gain long lasting skills and resources by positive emotions, that effect positively on their performance. Employee's creativity level increased when they find themselves mentally satisfied with their work and some sense of meaning in their jobs. They try to identify new ideas for improvements, try to complete their job duties with full devotion and feel happy at their work places.

Managers should increase working capacity and efficiency of employees by provide them all the facilities of job. The mental repertoire of employees expands when they feel pleased with their intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of their jobs. They feel fresh and try to identify new ways to solve a problem which are unique in nature and provides benefit to the organization. Managers should pay attention towards training and development of employees. It is necessary for managers to design job activities in such a way that employees can get amusement from their stressful jobs because it will affect positively on employees which in turn motivate them to show positive behavior. It helps employees to become more creative and involved at their work.

Recruitment and selection process should be upgraded with time. Mangers should design job interviews in such a way that helps them to identify those individuals whose skills and interests are match with the job duties. When employees feel that they are important for their organization and their presence is significant for the organization, their morale and loyalty increased.

Limitations and Future Directions

Due to limited resource cross sectional study was conducted but in future longitudinal study can be conducted to produce more accurate results. Study has used only one job attitude as mediator. In future, moderated mediation model can also be examined by using other remaining job attitudes. Only positive dimensions of SAW were studied but negative dimensions can incorporate to examine their impact on work innovations.

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