

## INNOVATIVENESS AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION WORKERS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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**Abstract:** *This paper is purposely to reviews the role played by factor of innovativeness in enhancing the job performance in non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This paper construct is built on a comprehensive recent literature review on NGOs, innovativeness and job performance. This paper proposes a conceptual framework to further understand the innovativeness in influencing NGOs worker throughout the job performance. This paper is then developed into concrete research hypothesis for future studies. The framework developed is conceptual and quantitative in nature. First, the significance of this study can be seen from the theoretical point of view. Second, from the applied significance perspective, this study is able to provide better understanding on the worker's performance in the service sector within the NGOs context. The definition and model developed for measuring performance can contribute significantly to existing literature on excellence measurement. In summary, this paper expected to propose the conceptual framework for future researchers to investigate and provide the empirical evidence on the relationship that exists between the innovativeness and job performance.*

**Keywords:** non-governmental organization, NGO, person job-fit, job performance

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## **Introduction**

Job performance of workers has a considerable impact on organization's performance due to the fact that high-performing employees can contribute to the successful implementation of the organization's goals (Lado & Wilson, 1994; Dessler, 2011). A deep insight into the workers' job performance will help the managers in making reasonable decisions related to the payment, progress and training of their employees (Piercy, Cravens & Morgan, 1998). Similarly, achievements in job performance prompt incentive payments or prizes for the employees (VanScotter, Motowidlo & Cross, 2000).

Such factors as globalization, demographic changes, ability gaps and lack of employees have a direct impact on the country's competitiveness, which in turn affects job performance of the workers (Davenport, 1999; Fernandez, 2001; Laprade, 2006). Dynamic nature of the work environment creates different challenges for the workers causing their inability to perform effectively (Galagan, 1997). Interestingly, managers are inclined to monitor their employees' job performance constantly by assigning various types of tasks to them (Dessler, 2011). Consequently, it is necessary to sustain high job performance and adequately distribute the work power in order to ensure organization's success on a global level (Tomaka, 2001). Non-governmental organization (NGOs) would be also considered in the present setting.

NGOs refer to the systems that are not part of the government and they do not act for profit (Jepson, 2005; KameriMbote, 2000). They aimed to resolve the problems, particularly for disadvantaged people (Adivar et al. 2010; Edgar & Lockie, 2010; Janya, 2007; Jepson, 2005). NGOs (whether registered or unregistered organizations) can support the evolution of the country (Promgird, 2008; Tongkawate & Tips, 1988).

This study concentrated on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), innovativeness and the job performance of workers in the NGOs. Past studies related to NGOs had shown that the importance of NGOs had increased throughout the world, both at the international level (Euske & Euske 1991; Reimann, 2006; Smith & Lumba, 2008; Ungpakorn, 2004a) as well as at the national level (Bano, 2008; Desai, 2003; Serra, Serneels & Barr, 2010). The United Nations (UN) too had broken its own scheme to supervise the growth of NGOs around the world (Martens, 2006; Mezzalama & Schumm, 1993; Weiss & Jolly, 2009).

## **Literature Review**

### **Innovativeness**

The notion of innovativeness has different interpretations. However, it can be generally defined as ability to discover or evaluate something from a new perspective. Based on certain definitions of innovativeness, this notion implies the use of creative skills.

Innovativeness can be regarded as humans' possession, a process which involves emotions, or the way of life which is related to intelligence, efficiency, originality and unconventionality (Yavuzer, 1994). These aspects of innovativeness have been reflected in numerous past studies. According to Guilford (1961), innovativeness is an acquired ability to think "out of the box". The definition of Torrance and Wu (1981) gives a deeper understanding of the notion: in their view, innovativeness also includes ability to face challenges, to look for the solutions to overcome the obstacles, to make possible assumptions and assess the outcomes.

In more recent studies innovativeness is considered as the ability to have a flexible thinking (Kiesswetter, 1983), ability to express ideas under different circumstances (Gibson & Chandler, 1988), ability to address the problems by giving a relevant view on the issues (Wakefield, 1992). Innovativeness is also defined as the cognitive process which involves the usage of the capabilities and skills of a person (Diakidoy & Kanari, 1999), and ability to reflect on the problems uniquely from different angles (Riza, 2000).

### **Innovativeness Defined**

Innovativeness is more generally applied as a means to evaluate the degree of newness 'of a novelty (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). Products which have a high degree of novelty are usually well-recognised compare to low innovative goods. Being innovative means having an aspiration to address the problems and introduce necessary changes if needed (Skerlavaj, Stemberger, Skrinjar, & Dimovski, 2007). It allows organization to benefit from the innovative skills of the workers, and as the result to perceive new changes in the environment adequately (Swink & Mabert, 2000). Nowadays the workplace environment is characterised by such negative aspects as hesitation, high risk and precariousness. Hence, there is a need to develop something new to facilitate organisations` prosperity (Skerlavaj et al., 2007).

Innovative skills play a very important role in business performance (Hurley & Hult, 1998). This mental ability gives a variety of options for the organization to meet the requirements of their clients for a long period of time that will ensure their successful cooperation in future (Banbury & Mitchell, 1995). Innovation is a process of transforming options and ideas into the real life (Tidd, Bessant, & Pavitt, 1997). It`s a two-way process where organizations deal with both clientele and providers, and comprehension institutions (Freeman, 1987; Kline & Rosenberg, 1986).

Innovation has been regarded as the main component of dynamic competence and competition of organizations since the work of Schumpeter (1934). In a broad sense, a person who possesses innovative skills will be capable to achieve success faster and benefit to the society rather than those who are not creative (Mansury & Love, 2008).

Innovative products facilitate strengthening and broadening of the organization to the new areas and promote its sustainable development (Erdil, Erdil, & Keskin, 2004). The processes of innovation include attainment, distribution and use of new knowledge (Calantone, Cavusgil, & Zhao, 2002) and successful transformation of the unique ideas within the association (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Hurley & Hult, 1998). In this regard, as it can be seen, wisdom atmosphere, corporate free enterprise, employee approval, and firm innovativeness are closely interconnected. This connection had been discussed in numerous past studies (Hurley & Hult, 1998). Innovativeness is a vital instrument for the companies to achieve their intended goals (Deshpandé, Farley, & Webster, 1993). The level of motivation affects the amount of new knowledge being acquired. (Dewar & Dutton, 1986). Organizations which are characterised by introducing innovative ideas gain a higher job performance and become competitive on the global market (Calantone et al., 2002). Therefore, it is important to develop creative and innovative skills of the workers so that they will be able to produce new valuable products.

## **Job Performance**

Job performance has always been considered as the key component of employee management. Job performance is considered as the ability of the workers to implement the tasks assigned by their respective organizations thereby meeting the requirements of the employers (Eysenck, 1998; Mathis & Jackson, 2000; Bohlander, Snell & Sherman, 2001).

## **Job Performance Defined**

Usually people are prone to consider job performance as something that a person does at his/her workplace. Thus, employees` job performance strongly depends on the different stages of the job and its peculiarities (Ackerman, 1987, Murphy, 1989). However, definitions of job performance hardly provide a clear understanding of the notion giving a generalised interpretation instead (Campbell, Gasser & Oswald, 1996). In this connection, job performance can be given more elaborated definition differently (Grubb, 1999).

According to Sarmiento and Beale (2007), job performance consists of two components: natural and acquired skills of the workers, and his/her willingness to use them in practice to perform excellently. Additionally, from the psychological point of view, job performance is considered based on the multidimensional construct approach (Borman, Hanson & Hedge, 1997; Avery & Murphy, 1998; Schmitt & Chan, 1998; Campbell, 1999; Hough & Oswald, 2000; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000).

To provide a deeper explanation of the notion of job performance, Campbell and his associates introduced the theory of performance which emphasizes the necessity to have a clear understanding of the role of job performance in assessing an individual performance of the employee (Campbell, 1990; Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993; McCloy, Campbell & Cudeck, 1994; Campbell, Gasser & Oswald, 1996; Campbell, 1999).

Campbell et al. (1993) defined performance as a person`s behaviour, namely his/her actions within the workplace context that can be monitored and evaluated in terms of his/her level of contribution to the organization`s goals. Campbell et. al pointed out that only actions that are controllable can be regarded as performance (Campbell et al., 1993). Despite there were many attempts to develop relevant frameworks of job performance, Campbell`s approach on the notion is considered as the most acceptable (Borman, Hanson & Hedge, 1997; Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997; Schmitt & Chan, 1998).

Based on the above-mentioned interpretations of job performance, in the present study this notion is therefore defined as the actions that an employee undertakes to meet the expectations and requirements of the organization, and which can be analysed in terms of his/her own proficiency.

## **Previous Research on Job Performance**

Past researches on job performance had found a stream of elements that could have determined the employee performance ranging from individual/employee related factors, organizational level factors as well as environmental elements. One of the elements that had been associated with job performance is commitment. For instance, a longitudinal study of twenty-five years by Jaramilloa, Mulki and Marshal (2005) on the effect of organizational commitment to the salesperson-job performance was done across fourteen countries with research carried on sales employees and non-sales employees. The empirical study revealed there was a confident relationship between organizational commitment and job functioning and this finding suggested

a stronger relationship occurred among the sales employees than non-sales employees. In accession to that, there exists a stronger correlation between organizational commitment and job performance in a collectivist compared to individualistic cultures. In other word, when the workers commitment is high, their job performance will increase.

In order to define the elements that could impress the job performance of nurses in Riyadh, a survey was carried out by Al Ahmadi (2009). The study found that job performance was positively associated with employee organizational commitment and job satisfaction as well as with some personal related factors like age, experience, gender, nationality and marital condition. Job satisfaction had also received attention in other researches. In the same manner, through a study that was taken on the casino employees in Macau, it was also discovered that job satisfaction was significantly related to job performance and had a positive effect while at the same time lack of interpersonal skills had also found to contribute to poor performance (Gu & Chi, 2009).

An empirical study was held out by Sarmiento, Beale, and Knowles (2007) on the determinants of perceived job performance in a sample of shop-floor employees in a fabrication plant in northern Mexico. In the study, variables like job satisfaction, age and education were hypothesized to cause an effect on employee job performance. The survey demonstrated that job satisfaction was again found to sustain a confident relationship with task execution as shown in the past studies. Moreover, this study had found no substantial relationship between age and education with shop floor employee performance. Sarmiento and Beale (2007) further noted the relationship between education and job performance seems to suffer a negative relationship. Similarly, study of nurses found that education and job performance to deliver a negative relationship. Besides that, a study by Ng and Feldman (2009) revealed differing results in which education found to be positively linked to the employee job performance.

Research by Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic and Baddar (2006) in Northern Cyprus was to look at the relationship between several variables such as competitiveness, self-efficacy and effort with employee job performance. The results indicated that self-efficacy, competitiveness and effort had a significant positive effect on the job performance of the Frontline employees.

Similarly, the effect of self-efficacy was also investigated by D'Amato and Zijlstra (2008) among the hospital employees in Italy. They had likewise found that self-efficacy together with psychological climate have positive effects on the work outcome in terms of business execution. In a separate study, an effort was pulled in to study the causal relation between role stress, customer orientation, selling orientation, and job performance of retail salespeople. The study brought out that role conflict and role ambiguity affected customer orientation and finally affected job performance when mediated by customer orientation (Knight, Kim & Crutsinger, 2007).

Meanwhile, the research was also directed to determine whether job demands and job resources could affect the job performance while being mediated by burnout among the front employees working in the banking sector (Babakus, Yavas & Ashill, 2009). The study also examined the moderating function of client orientation in the kinship. The results showed burnout mediates the effects of task demands and business resources on business performance and turnover intentions. Customer orientation was related directly to burnout and job performance and act as a fender to the dysfunctional effects of task demands on burnout and job performance.

In order to determine whether motivation, ability and role perception can be the predictors of job performance, an investigation was carried out on seven Ethiopian public organizations. The study uncovered no substantial relationship between ability and worker's performance as compared to motivation and role perception, which experienced a positive impression on public presentation. The effects had also shown that even though motivation can affect the performance of employees, its force will worsen as the employing years of experience starts to increase (Hailesilasie, 2009).

Job performance is further studied in relation to personality factors. A study by Sawyer, Srivinas and Wang (2009) was run out among the call centre's employees, to explore the relationship between personality factors (of the five-element model) and performance using job service performance as indicators and on the use of emotional exhaustion in this relationship. Using structural equation modelling as the data analysis tool, the study revealed with the exception of extraversion/introversion, the residue of the personality dimension of the five element model which consist of conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to new experience and emotional stability as well as locus of control had shown to be significantly related to one or more of the performance standards. At the same time, the survey also showed the relationship between emotional stability, locus of control and intention to leave was mediated by the emotional exhaustion.

Furthermore, in order to see the relationship between personality and job performance and the moderating effect of cognitive ability in the relationship, an investigation was carried out by Wright, Kacmar, McMahan and Deleeuw (1995). The survey was carried out on a group of 203 warehouse employees using personality tests with aptitude as the predictors of functioning. Findings from this survey revealed that cognitive ability explained a significant 2 percent of the variation in execution. Nevertheless, when cognitive ability interacted with personality, there was a significant incremental of 9 percent of the variation in execution. This has proven that although personality can influence job performance, the relationship will become more important due to cognitive ability.

Research on job performance was also practiced among the Russian employees. The behaviour of 1500 Russian workers in relation to attitudes and performance was studied by Linz and Semykina (2008). The purpose of this study was to expand the previous works on the relationship between locus of control and job performance. The results showed a substantial conflict between internal and outside locus of command in relation to employee job performance. Those people that demonstrated internal locus of control tend to perform more serious but the influence of locus of control on performance was found to depart according to gender, region and supervisory status. At the same time it was also found that locus of command influence on job performance is rather low among the respondents that were reviewed.

Investigation by Theodosiou and Katsikea (2007) on the export sales managers' performance was done using behaviour-based command and line of work related characteristics. It was revealed that genes such as team orientation, intrinsic motivation, recognition, motivation, professional competence, sales support orientation, and customer orientation can influence the job performance of those exports sales managers and the factor psychic distances do moderate the relationship between those behaviours-based control factors and public presentation.

Study by Medlins and Green (2009) was led to study the relationship between goal settings, employee involvement, and workplace optimism with individual job performance. It was

hypothesized that goal setting to be positively impacted employee engagement, employee engagement as positively impacting workplace optimism, and workplace optimism as positively impacting individual performance. The written report indicated, all hypotheses were supported and concluded that individual job performance can be determined by those three variables.

The above-mentioned literatures on job performance research had shown that many factors could influence the job performance of workers. However, the above-cited subject areas were not specifically tailored to the studies related to the task performance of workers in NGOs. As indicated by the theory of performance Campbell et al. (1993), performance component is a function of declarative knowledge, procedural and skills knowledge and motivation (Campbell, 1990; Campbell et al., 1993). In other words, in order to do the behaviour in one of the dimensions, a person needs to know what to do (having clarity on job outlook), how doing it (possessing the innovativeness) and have the desire to perform it (being moved).

### **Relationship Between Innovativeness and Job Performance**

Covin and Slevin (1989) studied the performance of 161 entrepreneurial firms in two different environments – with and without favourable conditions. The researchers made an analysis of the firms by looking at such factors as innovativeness, risk taking and proactivity at the workplace.

The study was grounded on the Miller's (1983) original conceptualization using the three dimensions and the works of other researchers as well (Ginsberg, 1985; Karagozulu & Brown, 1988; Morris & Paul, 1987; Naman & Slevin, 1993; Zahra & Covin, 1995).

To gain an insight into the entrepreneurial orientation and performance relationship, there is a need to examine the multidimensional nature of job performance construct (Cameron, 1978; Chakravarthy, 1986). The authors claim that entrepreneurial activity or process can contribute to the positive results to one dimension of job performance, and negative results to another job performance dimensions. Hence, this study looked at overall performance indicators relevant in measuring the academicians' performance, taking into consideration task performance as the sole dimension of job performance to be assessed. This is linked up to the operational definition of job performance given where job performance in this subject area was defined as behaviours academicians engage in while at employment that leads to organizational goals and is part of the academicians' responsibilities and duties, behaviours that are formally evaluated by the organization (Campbell, 1990). Apart from that, task performance is linked up to task oriented behaviours associated with the job as an academician that can be easily placed and evaluated.

Hung and Chiang (2010) conducted a study that specifically focused on innovativeness and firm performance on 122 Taiwanese electronic-product manufacturers. They found that Taiwanese electronic companies' proclivity for open innovation relates positively to managers' perceived firm performance. Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) recognised innovativeness as an important general aspect of performance, particularly for jobs that required problem-solving or that have any discretion in how the job was done; in fact, innovativeness was an important part of in-role performance. According to Rodan (2002) innovativeness has been considered as a type of performance primarily for creative occupation.

Stewart (2009) implemented a study on innovativeness in entrepreneurial orientation among front line employees and explored that innovativeness improved service and sale facility. Davis,

Bell, Payne and Kreiser (2010) found out that those managers who had preferred using innovative activities had a great impact on the company's performance. Their study was focused on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance. If to consider business performance and performance of a firm at the very beginning of its development, innovativeness influences business performance in a positive way (Hughes & Morgan, 2007). Coulthard (2007) carried out a research on Australian industries using Lumpkin and Dess's (1996) entrepreneurship construct. The study revealed that performance and the dimensions of innovation and proactiveness positively affect each other.

Fouda (2007) studied innovativeness in Canadian ICT firms. According to the findings, innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking positively affect firm's performance. Monsen (2005) on the other hand investigated the performance of an individual in the organization. He also examined the role that individuals play in entrepreneurship by looking at the impact of entrepreneurial culture on employee attitudes and performance. He found that innovativeness did influence individual's job performance as mediated by role ambiguity and organizational identification for full-time employees and managers.

### **Research Framework and Hypothesis**

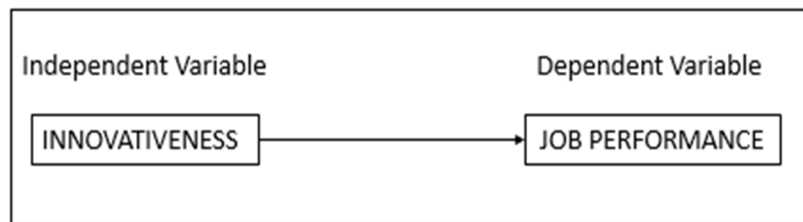
The objective of conducting this research is to determine the relationship that may exist between innovativeness and job performance of the NGOs worker. Practically, all research studies in social and behavioural sciences irrespective of disciplines need a rationale or basis for directing inquiry. Sekaran (2005) said that research framework is a representation of conceptual of how a researcher formulates logical sense or theorizes of the relationships between various parts which have been classed as significant to the problem of research. In principal, a framework of theoretical attempts to integrate important pieces of information mainly varying in a coherent approach and thus conceptualizes a problem which can be looked into. A theoretical framework usually provides a formal explanation of the relationships among independent, dependent, moderating, mediating, control and extraneous variables in order to ease the reader in understanding the theorized relationships.

To summing up, the study's objective is to analyze the relationship between independent variable namely innovativeness and dependent variable namely job performance. Hence, this paper proposes to produce a theoretical framework of the study and propose hypothesis to be examined based on the relationship among the variables.

Sekaran (2005) mentioned that the concept of research framework is to explain the relationships between the variables in a study. The construction of the research framework of this study is prepared based on the literature review of the theories and concept of innovativeness and job performance.

Although there were many variables that have been identified to have influence on job performance, few of them were consistently supported by studies that investigated specifically on job performance had defined it. This is mainly due to lack of a standard definition for what constitutes job performance (DelVecchio, 1999). Therefore, a research framework is developed in relation to the hypothesis of this study as shown in Figure 1.0.





**Figure 1.0 Research Framework**

### **Statement of Hypothesis Development**

Hypothesis are statements in quantitative studies, in which the researcher formulates a prediction or a supposition around the outcome of a relationship between the variables. Creswell (2012) mentioned that hypothesis is traditionally employed in observational research and they do as research questions that narrow the purpose of the statement to specific predictions. Theories are a clear statement of what is expected to be studied. Generally, hypothesis development is set up prior to the conduct of the research that identifies the main concepts involved in the study.

Passing upon the literature review discussed in the previous part and the proposed research framework, hypothesis statements have been conveyed based on the relationships between innovativeness and job performance. This study will principally investigate the relationship that exists between the independent variables and dependent variable. Thus, the following research hypothesis was developed based on the given research framework (see Figure 1.0) and to analyze the relationship between innovativeness with the job performance of employees:

Direct Relationship Hypothesis Statement of Independent Variable

**H1: There is a significant relationship between innovativeness and job performance.**

The above hypothesis state the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable and will be verified in the next phase of this study. Creswell (2012) defines hypothesis testing as a process of formulating decisions about outcomes by comparing an observed value with a population value to ascertain if no difference or relationship exists between the values.

In order to test the framework and hypothesis, non-governmental organization's worker will be selected as a sample. This population is selected as a group that have deemed to own significantly higher commitment sense to ensure the non-profit resiliency by improving their innovativeness. In the research conducted by McClelland (1973), he pointed out that innovativeness and individual characteristics predict successful job performance. Furthermore, these organizations represent various types of NGOs such as politic, charity, social, recreation, mutual benefit, art and culture, trading, professional, rights, security and religion.

### **Conclusion**

This paper proposes the conceptual framework that may work for upcoming research to run with empirical proof on the relationship that exist between the innovativeness and job performance and the researchers expect that the research result will contribute to the professionals to rationalize additional determination in refining the job performance. Worker is an asset for the organization, therefore the success or failure of the organization depends on worker's job

performance. Hence, the paper examines and studies the literature review on worker development and its effect on worker's job performance and the key variables identifies related to worker's development and their performance. The further discussion develops a proposed model which explains the relationship between worker development variable (innovativeness) and job performance and consequently the worker performance will effect on organizational effectiveness. Thus, this research might provide better understanding to the decision makers on the innovativeness significant role in relation to the job performance.

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