

Chapter 59

Strategic Leadership, Readiness for Change, and Innovative Work Behavior: A Field Study From Turkey

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ABSTRACT

At the present time, business work environments are becoming more volatile and competitive. The development of information technologies, rapid changes of organizational structures, changeable customer attitudes are more important for today's organizations. These features of the marketplace direct organizations to be in search of new methods to achieve and maintain sustainable performance. Leadership, employee favorable work behavior, technological investments are some methods to provide continuity of an organization's existence. This chapter aims to obtain influence of strategic leadership on the employees' innovative work behavior. Furthermore, it is expected to obtain the mediator role of readiness for change in this relation. In the study, the sample is composed of four-star hotel employees in Antalya, Turkey. This evidence-based field study proves new implementation's impact on the employees.

INTRODUCTION

At the present time, the business work environment is becoming more volatile and competitive. The development of information technologies, rapid changes in organizational structures, changeable customer attitudes are more important for today's organizations. These features of the marketplace direct organizations to be in search of new methods to achieve and maintain sustainable performance. Leadership, employee's favorable work behaviours, technological investments are some of the interesting methods to provide continuity of the organization's existence.

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Sustainability of an organization is related with leaders, employees and the market structure of the organizations. If leaders manage the organization with the orientation of the environmental requirements, the impact of the structural volatilities will be limited. In addition to that, employees' behaviours will be determinative on the sustainability of the organization. Particularly, employee's attitudes have a significant value when a change is planned or realized in the organization. If the logic of the environmental changes is perceived as favorable by the employees, it means that they are ready for a change. Besides, employees who expect a change is necessary for the organization generally demonstrate innovative work behaviours in the basic of related changes.

In this study, it is aimed to obtain the influence of strategic leadership on the employees' innovative work behaviours. Furthermore, it is expected to obtain the mediator role of readiness for change in this relation. In the study, sample is composed of 4-star hotel employees who live in Antalya, Turkey. This hotel is competing with other hotels in the region. In this hotel, most of the daily activities were performed manually. They have not used technological systems and information technologies in operations until their supervisor noticed that technology is everything for a volatile sector's organization. They bought technological practices, devices, and systems for the hotel's services. With this investment they aimed to i) compete with competitors, ii) open up to the world, iii) increase employee's performance, iv) minimize the failures. Managers decided to implement information technology applications on the hotel services. Most of the daily operations started to conduct through the use of new technologies. Hotelier and the leader of the employees know that the return of the investment will be profitable for them. In this study it is expected to prove mediator role of readiness for change on the relation between strategic leadership and innovative work behaviours.

BACKGROUND

Strategic Leadership

Leadership is both a process of inspiring others to accomplish planned aims and a function of sharing values (Tarigan & Kraus, 2017; Yukl & Lepsinger, 2006). Leaders are responsible for the formulation and implementation of organisational practices in the perspective of strategic requirements (Hosmer, 1982). Bass (1981) defined leadership by emphasising on some points like; characteristic traits, focus on groups and teams, inducing power, an instrument to achieve aims and inspire. Basadur (2004) described the effective leader's characteristics as; helping subordinates for problem-solving, supporting them for creativity, mentoring employees for innovativeness, integrating individual and organisational aims, providing sustainability of innovative approaches, managing differences with the beneficial perspective, coordinating of all members in the organisation with harmony.

Strategic Leadership Theory goes back to "Upper Echelons Theory", which was developed by Hambrick and Mason (1984), which states output related dominance, social construct and symbolism refer to top management structure (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Leadership models and its outcomes relations were being investigated in the 1970s while upper echelons theory attracted the attention of scholars with defining the top management team's roles in mid-1980s (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000). Hambrick and Mason (1984) focused on the top management team's experience, characteristic traits, and values to understand how they perceive the environmental issues to compete with others. With this approach, the authors aimed to draw up the relationship between these specifications and the leader's profile.

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