Chapter 9

The Importance of Behavior and Personal Values for Managers’ Attitudes Towards Innovativeness: Empirical Evidence From Austria, Poland, and Slovenia

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of prevalent management behavior on management attitudes about creativeness and innovativeness, while also considering the impact of personal values, in three Central European economies, having different development paths, namely Slovenia, Austria, and Poland. Personal values are measured using Schwartz value survey, using openness to change, conservation, self-transcendence and self-enhancement value dimensions. Results reveal that manager’s behavior significantly influences on manager’s attitudes regarding innovativeness, in all three countries. The impact of personal values on shaping management behavior and manager’s attitudes toward innovativeness is significant only in few instances in Austrian sample, while in Slovenia and Poland it is insignificant. Regarding the mediating effect of managers’ personal values on the association between management behavior and their creativeness, our results reveal marginal role of personal values.

INTRODUCTION

In literature and business practice the important role of creativity in organizations is well acknowledged (Amabile, 1988; DeBono, 1992; Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2001). Huge proportion of this research focuses on creativity and more broadly on innovations, and explains their roles in organization’s success and how creative and/or innovative behavior contributes to the organizational success (Collins & Porras, 2002; Afuah, 2003; Skarzynski & Gibson, 2008). Many studies in this field also offer a lot of evidence about drivers of employee’s, person’s, organizational or national creativity (Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2001; Nauwelaers & Reid, 2002; Afuah, 2003). However, no deep focus on the role of management behavior in shaping management’s or organization creativity and innovativeness exists. Furthermore, studies in this field are mainly based on practices of well-developed Western economies. Thus, when turning to emerging economies in Central Europe, these issues are becoming way less investigated (Dabic, Potocan, Nedelko, & Morgan, 2013).

In current economic conditions it is often claimed that economies and entities within economies lack creativity and, more generally, innovative thinking and behavior. This issue is way more critical in emerging economies than in well-developed economies (Dyck & Mulej, 1998; Potočan & Mulej, 2007; Dabic et al., 2013). Emerging economies such as former transition economies in Central and Eastern Europe can reduce or even nullify their lag when designing working conditions and a respective behavior grounded in innovative, flexible, and technically modern economy. In order to increase creativity in organizations in emerging economies, an important role is also assigned to management since it must create and also assure suitable conditions for creativeness and innovativeness in organization (i.e., for all organizational employees).

Outdated patterns of management behavior in emerging markets and the legacy of previous collectivistic/socialistic orientations of managers, both of which are still present in transition economies, could have important implications for future development of manager’s behavior as well as their creativeness. Since the problems could rest in patterns of behavior it is important to address the possible impact of personal values on shaping management behavior, management innovativeness, and addressing the link between them.

We focus our research on management innovativeness in organizations since management plays a key role, in process of creation and/or assurance of suitable conditions and prerequisites for innovativeness in organization and its employees, especially in emerging markets of Central Europe (Dyck & Mulej, 1998; Potočan & Mulej, 2007).

With this research we want to contribute to the existing cognitions about management behavior, management innovativeness, and the link between them, that is often justified and based on cognitions of well-developed economies (Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2001; Collins & Porras, 2002; Skarzynski & Gibson, 2008), with providing evidence for selected Central Europe economies. Thus, we provide empirical evidence about the association between management behavior and manager’s attitudes toward creativeness and innovativeness for one well-developed and two emerging economies in Central Europe. In frame of this link, we also address the role of personal values in shaping innovative behavior, since it is important to determine the impact of outdated behavioral patterns of management from previous system of collectivism/socialism (Nedelko & Mayrhofer, 2012; Nedelko & Potocan, 2013).

Addressing the issues of management attitudes toward creativity is of huge importance in former transition, nowadays emerging economies, since often outdated patterns of behavior are present, which
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