

ISMC 2021  
16<sup>th</sup> International Strategic Management Conference**INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND INNOVATIVE WORK  
BEHAVIOR: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CREATIVE SELF-  
EFFICACY**

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**Abstract**

Being innovative and delivering innovative outputs is vital for organizations of today. Innovation ability ensures and enables efficiency, competitiveness, and adaptation to changes. In order to exploit these benefits, organizations need employees that exhibit innovative work behavior. When motivated, employees can be expected to exhibit higher levels of innovative behavior at work. However, motivation alone would not provide the desired increase, unless creative self-efficacy is entered into the picture. This study aims to examine the relationship between intrinsic motivation and innovative work behavior relationship while taking the mediating role of creative self-efficacy into account between the two. Research data was collected by survey method through a questionnaire from a sample of 507 white-collar employees working in firms that operate in Istanbul, Turkey. For data analysis, SPSS 25 and AMOS 22 statistical analysis software were used. Structure, structural validity, and hypothesized relationships were investigated through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) analyses. Results revealed lack of a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and innovative work behavior. However, when the influence was mediated through creative self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation moderately increased innovative work behavior. Findings shed light on the crucial role of creative self-efficacy and stress the importance of the construct in managing innovative work behavior.

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*Keywords:* Creative self-efficacy, innovative work behavior, intrinsic motivation

## 1. Introduction

In today's information age where rapid changes are experienced, businesses, institutions and organizations need to innovate. Innovation enables organizations to present creative and innovative business outputs to ensure efficiency, gain strength in competition, achieve organizational goals and keep up with change. Innovative work behaviors of employees have an important place in the innovation of enterprises and the creation of innovative business outputs. In this context, the concepts of intrinsic motivation, creative self-efficacy and innovative work behavior have been examined along other relevant constructs in literature. So far, scholars of the field conducted various studies that examined binary combinations of the relationships between intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy attributes and innovative work behaviors of employees. These studies imply that the nature of innovative behavior is complex and is not basic enough to generate such behavior by just being intrinsically motivated. However, if employees possess a certain level of belief in their creative capabilities along with motivation, this would lead them to exhibit innovative behavior when they are working. The construct of creative self-efficacy represents such belief and is likely the essential mediator enabling the relationship between motivation and innovative behavior. The existence of this phenomenon is investigated through this study.

## 2. Literature Review

Motivation can be defined as the process that forms the drive or the action that serves as the enactor to achieve an aim. (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2016). Motivation tackles an employee's goals, behavior, needs and feedback regarding his performance (Doğan & Aslan, 2018). These features of motivation make it important for business life and a subject of inquiry for management.

Depending on the origin of affecting factors, motivation types have been classified as intrinsic or extrinsic in relevant literature. In extrinsic motivation, satisfaction forms through external mediators. Such factors play a crucial role in emergence of intrinsic motivation through removal of employee dissatisfaction (Aslan & Doğan, 2020). Extrinsic motivation requires a rewarding output at the end of completed work to motivate an employee (Çetin et al., 2016). Tools of extrinsic motivation are regarded as important element to be used to ensure completion of tasks and provide employees with the feeling of freedom in the work they undertake (Mankin et al., 2019). Work conditions, salary system, work guarantee, advancement conditions and promotion, social environment, status, work environment, and image of organization can be counted among extrinsic motivation tools.

Intrinsic motivation can be defined as “motivation of a person by the work itself, without any external control that regulates one's behavior” (Ersarı & Naktiyok, 2012, p. 83). An intrinsically motivated person is motivated for pleasure or opportunity, with emotions arising from work or task, rather than necessity, need, or extrinsic rewards. Though intrinsic motivation also changes over time according to individual characteristics, the nature of the job, intrapersonal processes or the environment in which they work, intrinsic motivation creates an internal desire for individuals to reach the best and develop their own capacities (Çetin et al., 2016).

It can be stated that the employee works in an internally motivated manner if s/he has no external reward other than having only work and work-related emotions, and if the reward is mediated by the person. Taking an active role in one's work is also very effective in achieving good performance in addition to doing his/her job lovingly, thus feeling good in a competitive environment and overcoming stress easily. Therefore, when the person focuses on internal rewards instead of external rewards, both job satisfaction will increase and s/he will be able to create a meaningful goal by enjoying his/her job (Künye & Aydıntan, 2020). Since intrinsic motivation is based on the voluntary activities of a person, it can be said that organizations working with highly motivated people will always be ahead (Ayan, 2015). At the same time, intrinsic motivation plays an important role in realizing organizational goals, as it includes requirements such as performing the job in the best way and specializing in one's own job (Yılmaz, 2018).

Self-efficacy is the level of belief that determines the actions one performs, the tasks that must be fulfilled, and their behavior in the events they face. It can also be defined as the person's undertaking a job, using the resources he has, depending on the desired performance and situation (Bağcıoğlu & Kaygın, 2018). Within the scope of belief affecting creativity, creative self-efficacy represents the confidence one has in using his creativity in his task (Duran, 2020).

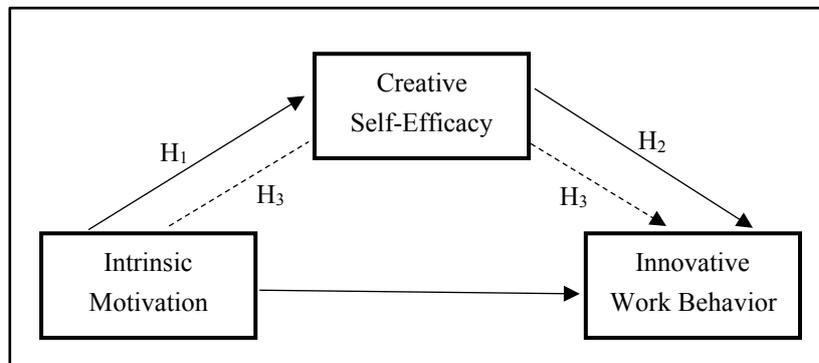
Creative self-efficacy differs from creativity. Creative self-efficacy is about taking the risk and making the effort necessary for creativity. While creative self-efficacy expresses the general belief that one can produce creative results in one's tasks, creativity requires creating new and useful results that are more specific to the field. While the job itself, leadership and self-factors, duration of the task, supervisory behavior and challenging work are related to creative self-efficacy, work autonomy, organizational relationship and learning orientation as contextual factors have also been identified as factors affecting creative self-efficacy (Rabbani & Sarmad, 2019). Creative self-efficacy, as the power affected by motivation, ensures that people stick to their goals in their failures and thus the stability of the employees (Diaz, 2016).

In the relationship between intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy, it has been stated that intrinsically motivating behaviors allow the person to feel self-sufficient and have self-efficacy (Brief & Aldag, 1977). In other words, it has been determined that people who approach their work with internal influences and intrinsic motivation exhibit more creative performance than those who adopt external influences. Yılmaz (2008) stated that internally motivated individuals dedicate themselves more to work, which is an important factor in reinforcing the employee's self-efficacy belief. Akbaba and Aktaş (2005) revealed that students who are intrinsically motivated have more self-efficacy. Aslan et al. (2016) found a linear relationship between motivation and perception of self-efficacy.

Innovative behavior can be seen at different stages in the formation and implementation processes of innovation. In emergence of innovation, employees come up with ideas to find solutions to problems, make suggestions to improve performance, search for and provide necessary opportunities, and create innovative behaviors by generating ideas. In the application of innovation, employees develop behaviors and lead innovative behavior with the aim of accepting and realizing the created idea. Innovative behavior can be seen as a comprehensive, multidimensional formation that includes all behaviors that employees can benefit from at stages of innovation (Ulusal & Yüreğir, 2020).

For organizations to be pioneers in innovation, employee creativity, innovation skills, innovative work behavior development ability and innovative behavior support are important. In human capital based innovative strategy, the innovativeness of the employees and their innovative work behaviors stand out as important issues in achieving the determined targets, achieving high performance and coping with all kinds of global uncertainties in the competitive environment (Derin, 2018). Determining the factors that positively affect innovative employee behaviors and supporting them in organizations are effective in innovative idea and behavior creation (Kale, 2019). It is emphasized in innovation theory that positive perceptions of employees about their work environment affect innovative behaviors positively, while negative perceptions prevent the emergence of innovative behaviors (Hober et al. 2019). Encouraging attitudes by managers and shaping of suggestions that can improve the expertise of the employees makes a significant contribution to the emergence frequency of innovative work behaviors (Sezgin & Aksu, 2020).

Findings from previous studies hint of the existence of a positive relationship between self-efficacy and innovative work behaviors. In a study with teachers on the effect of self-efficacy on innovative work behaviors, Hsiao et al. (2011) reported that teachers' self-efficacy has a significant and positive effect on innovative work behaviors. Basim et al. (2008) had also found a significant and positive relationship between innovative work behavior and self-efficacy perception in a research they conducted with public sector employees. Özkan (2017) found a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and innovative work behaviors. The self-efficacy levels of the employees were found to significantly affect the creative and innovative work behaviors. Building on the findings so far, the following hypotheses and research model as presented in Figure 1 below are proposed and tested:



**Figure 1.** Research Model

H<sub>1</sub>: Intrinsic Motivation has a positive effect on Creative Self-Efficacy.

H<sub>2</sub>: Creative Self-Efficacy has a positive effect on Innovative Work Behavior.

H<sub>3</sub>: Creative Self-Efficacy mediates the positive effect of Intrinsic Motivation on Innovative Work Behavior.

### 3. Research Method

White-collar employees working in private sector in Istanbul city constitute the population of this study. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 200 participants prior to the main work. The research

survey was filled by a total of 526 participants. Through an examination of responses, incomplete and inconvenient ones were removed and the remaining 507 were deemed usable and formed the research data. The research sample was selected by snowball sampling method.

The research questionnaire was formed on Google Forms online platform. The link to the questionnaire was shared via e-mail, and participants filled the form on their personal or work computers. The research form consisted of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire contained demographic questions such as age, gender, personal education, and work position. The next three parts contained scales from previous works. The Intrinsic Motivation Scale by Dündar et al. (2007) was presented in the second part of the questionnaire. This scale consists of 9 items that measure one dimension. The third part of the questionnaire included the Creative Self-Efficacy Scale as adopted by Alayoğlu (2019). This scale measures Creative SelfEfficacy as a unidimensional construct with 8 items. The last part of the questionnaire presented the Innovative Work Behavior Scale adapted by Ceylan and Özbal (2005). The construct is measured unidimensionally with 9 items. A 5-point Likert scale was used for measurement throughout the questionnaire, where a 1 meant “Completely Disagree” and a 5 meant “Completely Agree”.

#### **4. Conclusion and Discussion**

Demographic information regarding study participants revealed that 54,2% were women (n=275) and 45,8% were men (n=232). In terms of education, 15,6% of the participants were highschool graduates (n=79), 46,9% completed an undergraduate program (n=238), %24,1 had a Master’s degree (n=122) and 13,4% had a PhD degree (n=68). With regard to their work positions, 54,6% were employees (n=277), 11% were junior administrative officers (n=56), 21,9% were mid level managers (n=111) and 12,4% were senior managers (n=63).

To examine the structural properties of this study’s constructs, an EFA was conducted with data from 200 participants in a pilot study. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett’s tests’ results confirmed the appropriateness of data for EFA analysis (KMO=0,935;  $p < 0,05$ ). Three factors emerged as the result of the analysis, explaining 77,758% of the total variance. Upon examination of these factors on the basis of their items, these factors were named as Innovative Work Behavior (IWB), Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE), and Intrinsic Motivation (IM). The factor that constitutes IWB contained 4 items, which had factor loadings ranging between 0,831 and 0,781. The CSE construct was made of 4 items with factor loadings between 0,802 and 0,765. The IM factor was also formed by 4 items that had factor loadings between 0,821-0,765. The Cronbach’s Alpha values emerged as 0,917 for IWB, 0,919 for CSE, and 0,870 for IM, which were accepted as proof for high internal reliability of the constructs. Based on these results, the researchers concluded that the expected constructs emerged as intended.

Following EFA, CFA and path analyses were conducted with the data collected from 507 participants. The measurement model used in CFA was based on the structure obtained from EFA. To assess the consistence between theoretical model and research data, goodness of fit index values were examined. Chi-square over degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/d.f.$ ), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Root-mean Square Residual (RMR), and Root-mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) values were checked for model fit

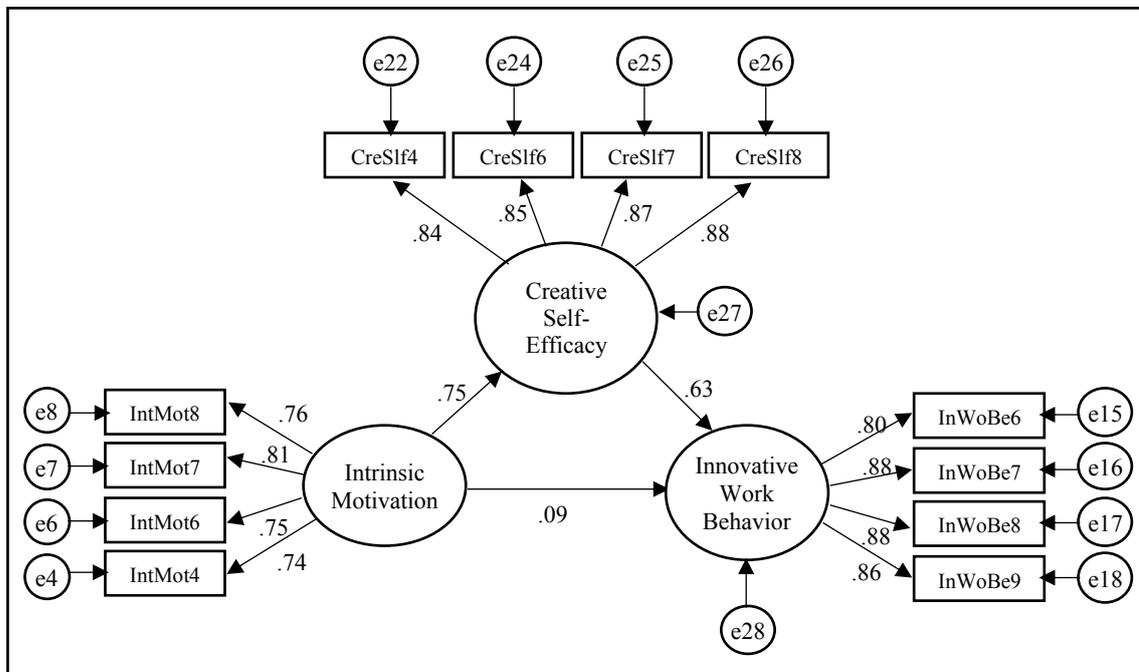
evaluation of this study. Table 1 below lists the obtained values along with the necessary criteria for good model fit.

**Table 1.** Goodness of Fit Index Criteria and CFA Results

Index	Good Fit	CFA
X <sup>2</sup> /sd	≤ 3	1,436
RMR	≤ 0,05	0,018
GFI	≥ 0,95	0,975
AGFI	≥ 0,90	0,962
NFI	≥ 0,95	0,983
TLI	≥ 0,95	0,993
CFI	≥ 0,97	0,993
RMSEA	≤ 0,05	0,029

The results for all of the selected Goodness-of-Fit indexes from CFA satisfied the good fit criteria, thus allowed the researchers to conclude that the data and the measurement model had a good fit (Wang & Wang 2012). In addition, composite reliability (CR) and discriminant validity of the constructs were investigated. No problem was observed regarding the CR values (IWB=0,918; CSE=0,919; IM=0,851) or the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values (IWB=0,737; CSE=0,741; IM=0,587). Each factor separated from the other two factors adequately and expressed the construct it represented decently.

After CFA, the path model was formed and run on the statistical analysis software. The goodness of fit values for the path model were all satisfying the index criteria (X<sup>2</sup>/sd=1,387; GFI=0,978; AGFI=0,966; RMR=0,012; NFI=0,986; TLI=0,993; CFI=0,996; RMSEA=0,028), thus the model fit was accepted to be established. The path model and the relevant weights of paths are shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Path Model with Results

According to these results, IM has a positive effect on CSE ( $\beta=0,753$ ;  $p<0,001$ ). This finding supports H1 of the study. CSE has a positive effect on IWB ( $\beta=0,628$ ;  $p<0,001$ ), which gives support to

H2. The mediation hypothesis H3 is tested through examination of the direct and indirect effect between two variables. The total effects between IM and IWB is significant ( $IM \rightarrow IWB = 0,56; p < 0,05$ ) when the mediator variable CSE is absent. In order to check for the existence of the mediation effect of CSE between IM and IWB, researchers conducted SOBEL test. There is no significant relationship between IM and IWB ( $\beta = 0,09; p > 0,05$ ) in the presence of the mediator variable and the SOBEL test result ( $Z = 8,123; p < 0,05$ ) indicates that CSE fully mediates the influence of IM on IWB as proposed by H3. This finding provided the necessary proof of support for the hypothesis.

The results clearly show that motivation by itself does not contribute to employees' innovative work behaviors. Although intrinsic motivation has been found to be an important factor in different aspects of employee performance, it alone does not seem to be effective in influencing innovative behaviors. If organizations want to increase innovative behaviors, they need to give priority to creating and promoting a work environment that cultivates employee motivation and employing employees with high creative self-efficacy. Matching the requirements and responsibilities of the job with the qualifications of the employee, giving employees a place in the jobs they are interested in, that is, they are curious about and are involved in, giving the autonomy to act independently, to make choices, to express their opinions freely and to evaluate the opportunities, giving job-related authority and responsibility, making them feel the dignity and importance of the job are among the things that managers can do to ensure that employees are intrinsically motivated. When these conditions are provided, the creative self-efficacy would lead employees to be more willing to engage in innovative behaviors as they conduct their jobs. This would especially contribute to the performance of organizations, which operate in sectors with high innovation requirements.

This study is subject to some limitations. First, the data is collected from only Istanbul city. It will be better to collect data from a wider geographic area for future studies. In addition, the study sample consists of white-collar employees from private sector. Collecting data from employees of other statuses such as managers or blue-collar employees and from other sectors may reveal valuable information. The study model can be extended to include other possibly relevant constructs such as openness to experience or innovativeness personality traits.

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