



The effect of personality traits and knowledge-sharing on employees' innovative performance: A comparative study of Egypt and Jordan

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ABSTRACT

Employees' positive personality traits are one main enabler of tourism organisations to develop knowledge-sharing culture and promote innovative performance. To achieve the principle of personality-job fit, this study aims to measure the influence of employees' personality traits on their knowledge-sharing behaviour and innovative performance. It also measures the mediation of knowledge-sharing between employees' personality traits – innovative performance relationships. The study employs the quantitative method based on an e-survey to gather data from employees working in travel agencies in Egypt and Jordan. Structural equation modelling was used for testing research causal relationships. Findings revealed that positive personality traits significantly improve employees' knowledge-sharing behaviour and contribute to their innovative performance advancement. The findings of the study provide significant implications for human resources managers in tourism organisations and tourism education policymakers to improve their recruitment procedures of employees and new education entrants (future graduates) to fit tourism career jobs and marketplace duties.

1. Introduction

The increasing competition, and technological developments in the marketplace pressure organisations to innovate faster to promote customer satisfaction and organisations' financial performance (Hussain, Konar, & Ali, 2016; Wang & Wang, 2012). One major factor that helps organisations to understand and develops their employees' innovative performance is identifying their personality traits (Fichter, Bernstorff, & Rohmann, 2020; Woods, 2018).

Previous research defines personality traits as the 'Big Five' model that includes five personality types with discriminant characteristics. The first type is *Openness to experience* personality (i.e., intellectually curious people seeking novel ideas, simply creative and untraditional ones), *Extraversion* (i.e., active and enthusiastic and have high social engagement behaviour), *Conscientiousness* (i.e., self-motivated people who follow a planned and systematic behaviour), *Agreeableness* (i.e., people with positive interpersonal relationships, tolerant, and cooperated), and *Neuroticism* (i.e., people with unstable emotions, negative attitudes, and low-quality interaction levels) (Stock, Hippel, & Gillert, 2016). Individuals' different traits have a major impact on their performance. According to the Trait Activation Theory, personality traits

could contribute to individuals' performance explanations (Horng, Tsai, Yang, Liu, & Hu, 2016).

Another factor that fosters employees' innovative performance in tourism and hospitality is their willingness to share knowledge and experience (Hu, Horng, & Sun, 2009; Rao, Yang, & Yang, 2018). Akram, Lei, Haider, and Hussain (2020) found that organisations that encourage employees to share the right knowledge will possibly become innovative. Matzler, Renzl, Müller, Herting, and Mooradian (2008) added that sharing knowledge is a potential source of creating and sustaining competitive advantages for businesses. However, Raisi, Baggio, Barratt-Pugh, and Willson (2020) and Cooper (2018) found that the embrace of knowledge management in the tourism industry has been slow, and Hardy, Vorobjovas-Pinta, and Eccleston (2018) mentioned that tourism and hospitality industries are lagging in promoting knowledge sharing, primarily in SMEs.

Three research areas were revealed after reviewing the previous research on innovative performance, knowledge-sharing, and personality traits. The first looks at employees' personality traits' effect on their knowledge-sharing practices in businesses (i.e., Anwar, 2017; Jadin, Gnams, & Batinic, 2013; Lotfi, Mukhtar, Ologbo, & Chiemke, 2016; Matzler et al., 2008). These studies revealed that there is a significant

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