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Research Article

Workplace Innovation and Knowledge Management as Predictors of Employee Performance in the Restaurant Industry of Davao City

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Abstract

With the contemporary competitive service industry, restaurants are using innovation and knowledge assets more to drive employee performance. Still, there are limited empirical studies in the Philippine foodservice industry on this aspect. This paper bridges the research gap by examining the impact of workplace innovation and knowledge management on the performance of rank-and-file restaurant employees in Davao City. Utilizing a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from 150 regular employees via a standardized survey instrument. Descriptive statistics described respondent characteristics, whereas Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses tested the strength and predictive value of workplace innovation and knowledge management on performance outcomes. Outcomes indicated high positive correlations between worker performance and workplace innovation ($r = .71, p < .05$) and knowledge management ($r = .75, p < .05$). Regression analysis validated these variables as significant predictors, explaining 64.1% of the performance variation ($R^2 = .641, F = 131.13, p < .001$). The primary drivers were idea generation, knowledge sharing, and technical skill development, which were associated with increased productivity, flexibility, and job satisfaction. These results underscore the practical importance of cultivating innovative cultures and promoting robust knowledge-sharing practices to enhance workforce performance and organizational competitiveness in the restaurant industry.

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1. Introduction

Employee performance plays a crucial role in the success of restaurants, which are expanding rapidly in Davao City. Although restaurants are experiencing significant growth, some businesses struggle to manage employee performance effectively, which limits their potential for success (Committee, 2015). It is suggested that knowledge-sharing employees exhibit lower creativity, which can hinder knowledge transfer and innovation (Zhang et al., 2018). Furthermore, research has found that a lack of resources, such as insufficient funding and outdated technology, can be obstacles to executing innovative ideas and handling data effectively (Muthuveloo et al., 2019).

Patterson (2021) stated that employee motivation enhances performance and fosters a greater awareness of their inherent worth, leading to improved productivity and increased dedication towards task completion as directed by the restaurant manager. In addition, as cited by Restaurant Times (2019), when workers are properly trained, their loyalty is more likely to occur. By creating a solid team of loyal core members, organizations can successfully reduce turnover rates and encourage maximum employee performance in completing assigned tasks. As cited by Zhenjing et al. (2022), the authors noted that the productivity and efficiency of organizations are directly influenced by the performance of employees, which in turn supports overall economic development. Additionally, employee performance can contribute to business success and economic value by enhancing output, quality, and customer satisfaction (Zhenjing et al., 2022).

Worker motivation and quality are crucial for workplace innovation, as they enable the production of creative ideas, effective teamwork, and the application of innovative solutions, thereby creating an environment that fosters innovation and fuels long-term growth and competitiveness (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

Moreover, the knowledge and performance of workers have a very high relationship because employees who perform well can acquire, transfer, and apply knowledge within the organization. This leads to better decisions, higher productivity, and the development of a knowledge-oriented culture, where constant learning, innovation, and organizational success are fostered (Abubakar et al., 2017).

While studies have focused on the causal connection between knowledge management and employee performance, as well as the relationship between workplace innovation and knowledge management, a significant research gap still exists regarding the specific causal mechanisms and underlying determinants that affect these relationships (McLarnon et al., 2022). Further research is warranted to understand how employee performance behaves as a dependent variable shaped by innovation in the workplace and knowledge management as independent variables, thereby unraveling the dynamics and identifying possible mediating or moderating variables in this interaction. This will foster a deeper understanding of the interaction among these variables. The researcher could not find a study that was being conducted explicitly in Davao City.

Employee performance is commonly recognized as a key determinant of restaurant success, especially in fast-growing markets like Davao City. As businesses continue to grow, most still struggle with performance management, often due to factors such as inadequate knowledge sharing, low motivation, and constrained innovation. Previous research has focused on the influence of knowledge management and organizational innovation on employee outcomes, as well as their relationship to creativity, productivity, and staff retention. Most of this research has been conducted in larger corporate environments or other parts of the world, with a lesser focus on small- to medium-sized food firms in developing city

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centers. Additionally, little is known about the precise mechanisms by which knowledge and innovation practices influence employee performance. There is no existing study that has examined these variables in the restaurant industry of Davao City. This research fills the knowledge gap by examining how workplace innovation and knowledge management influence worker performance in this unique and under-researched local environment.

2. Materials and Methods

The Materials and Methods are given below. Ensure that all data, materials, and protocols related to the article are provided to the readers. If the data set used in the study is large and cannot be provided in the article, ensure it is deposited in a publicly available database or repository, provide the source, and include

2.1. Research Design

The study employed a quantitative research design, specifically the descriptive-correlational approach. Quantitative research enables the objective measurement and analysis of variables through numerical data, making it suitable for assessing perceived levels of employee performance, knowledge management, and workplace innovation among restaurant employees in Davao City.

The descriptive function of the design aimed to quantify the extent to which rank-and-file employees perceive workplace innovation practices and knowledge management approaches being implemented within their workplace environments, and how these relate to their performance outcomes. Descriptive research attempts to describe variables and situations as they happen naturally without control, as noted by McCombes (2019).

Concurrently, the correlational nature of the design aimed to determine the direction and extent of the relationship between the

The author intends to share the research results at conferences, publish a research paper for general circulation, and submit the manuscript to the university library for archival purposes. In addition, the research will be published in international journals in the future.

information to facilitate access to the data. Additionally, if the nature of the study requires ethical approval, such as a study involving animals or an experiment with humans, ensure that the information about the ethical approval is provided.

independent variables—workplace innovation and knowledge management—and the dependent variable, employee performance. This is a proper technique to use when determining the nature of naturally occurring variables and how they relate to one another without altering the research context (Stangor, 2011). It fails to build causality but forms an important role in determining statistically significant relationships.

Apart from correlation analysis, the study used multiple linear regression to evaluate the predictive ability of workplace innovation and knowledge management on employees' performance. The statistical procedure applied allowed the researcher to determine whether one of the two independent variables had a greater impact on the outcome variable.

This mixed descriptive-correlational-regression design provided an empirical and integrative framework for understanding how organizational strategies and practices influence individual

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employee-level outcomes in the service industry setting of Davao City.

2.2. Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The study's subjects were rank-and-file employees of chosen restaurants in Davao City. They were picked because they are directly engaged in the day-to-day operations of the business and are best familiar with the innovative procedures, knowledge-sharing processes, and performance metrics of the organization. To guarantee the similarity and relevance of the responses, the research was conducted on participants who had worked at their respective restaurants for a minimum of one year. A minimum of one year's tenure was guaranteed, ensuring respondents were adequately exposed to internal processes and working practices. Managerial, supervisory, and administrative staff, as well as those who had spent fewer than one year in the company or were employed on temporary or probationary terms, were excluded.

2.3. Research Instruments

The researcher employed an adapted survey questionnaire as the primary research instrument, which included three principal components reflecting the study's key variables: workplace innovation, knowledge management, and employee performance. These components were derived from validated instruments used in the empirical literature and were customized to fit the organizational and cultural realities of restaurants in Davao City. The workplace innovation section was adapted from Oukes (2010) and consisted of nine items, rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Items were distributed across three dimensions: idea generation (three items), idea championing (two items), and idea implementation (three items). The original instrument demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.90 to 0.95. Modifications were made to make the instrument appropriate for

In addition, 300 usable respondents participated in the study. This sample size falls within the recommended range by Hair et al. (2008) for multiple-variable correlational studies. The participants were sampled through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method that involves selecting participants based on specific inclusion criteria. This approach was suitable for the study, as it provided the researcher with an opportunity to gather data from participants who could offer informed, experience-informed views on workplace innovation, knowledge management, and employee performance. Cooperation with restaurant managers, team leaders, and academic contacts related to the industry also facilitated access to suitable respondents.

employees in the service sector. An equivalent scale was utilized to score the responses from 1.00–1.79 as "Very Low" to 4.20–5.00 as "Very High."

For the variable of knowledge management, the instrument was modified from Slavković and Babić (2013). It consisted of 14 items clustered into three indicators: knowledge creation (five items), knowledge transfer (five items), and knowledge embedding (four items). This tool utilized a five-point Likert scale and initially reported a reliability coefficient of 0.948. Wordings were modified to capture food service context-specific knowledge-sharing practices. A descriptive interpretation matrix, analogous to that used for workplace innovation, was employed to categorize respondents' perceptions.

The employee performance scale, adapted from Tabouli et al. (2016), consisted of 17 items

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assessing four dimensions: work efficiency (four items), work planning (four items), creativity and innovation (five items), and effort (four items). Rated on the same five-point Likert scale, the tool demonstrated high internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.964. The items were modified to fit the tasks and

expectations of rank-and-file employees working in the restaurant sector. All instruments were subjected to expert verification to ensure content accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and ease of understanding before actual deployment for data collection.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The process of data gathering employed a systematic and ethically proper methodology. Before actual implementation, clearance was sought from the Graduate School of the University of the Immaculate Conception and ethical clearance from the UIC Research Ethics Committee. Both in-house and external panels initially reviewed the pilot-tested survey questionnaire to ensure assurance regarding cultural acceptability and content clarity. Once validated, a group of enumerators who had undergone training was recruited for data collection.

The potential participants were approached via several avenues, including social media and email, and screened using inclusion criteria that specified one year of uninterrupted service in a restaurant in Davao City. Other institutional permissions, like permission letters with signatures from the research adviser and the Graduate School Dean, were obtained to legitimize the process. Participants who

qualified for inclusion and provided their informed consent were invited to complete the survey either online via Google Forms or in person, based on their convenience and accessibility. The data collection took place within a one-month duration in the latter half of the first quarter of 2023.

The responses upon completion were coded, checked, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This program facilitated detailed statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression. These methods enabled the researcher to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each variable, measure the associations between workplace innovation, knowledge management, and employee performance, and identify the most significant predictors through regression analysis. This ensured the empirical validity and rigor of findings.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to rigorous ethical standards approved by the University of the Immaculate Conception's Research Ethics Committee. Ten ethical aspects were thoroughly considered throughout the entire research process: social value, informed consent, welfare of vulnerable groups, risk-benefit assessment, privacy and confidentiality, justice, transparency, researcher qualifications, facility adequacy, and community involvement.

To ensure social value, the research was designed to generate meaningful insights that

could benefit both employees and management in the restaurant industry, while promoting principles of sustainability, diversity, and inclusivity. Informed consent was obtained using Form 0057, the university's standard format. Prior to their participation, respondents were informed of the study's purpose, their rights, and that participation was voluntary, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. For ethical openness, respondents were also given the option to skip certain questions that might cause them discomfort or emotional

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distress. Their information was kept confidential and anonymous throughout the research process.

Participants who were considered vulnerable—i.e., individuals with diminished ability to provide informed consent—were omitted from the study to prevent any possibility of exploitation. The risk-benefit ratio of the study was low, and the survey tool was carefully designed to avoid including language that might be perceived as offensive or disturbing. Data privacy was ensured, consistent with Republic Act 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012), where all personal information gathered was used solely for research purposes and stored securely. All results were submitted in summary to maintain anonymity.

Justice was upheld in the equitable selection of participants, which was based solely on grounds of eligibility. Their involvement was valued through minor tokens such as 300MB of mobile

data and a ballpoint pen. The researcher ensured transparency by keeping all processes open to solicit feedback from ethics reviewers, advisers, and respondents. Copies of the outcome were provided to those who were willing to receive them, and arrangements were made for presenting the outcome at national and international conferences.

The researcher was capable of conducting quantitative research, complemented by expert consultations, adviser advice, and critical review. The required facilities—such as digital resources, data storage systems, and academic material—were available to facilitate research. Lastly, community engagement was maintained through the work of enumerators who were knowledgeable about the industry and by sharing results with restaurant managers, thereby sustaining the practical application of research findings in enhancing employee performance and organizational decision-making.

3. Results

This section presents the study's findings, organized into subsections for clarity and ease of understanding. Tables support data to highlight the key results.

3.1. Workplace Innovation, Knowledge Management, and Employee Performance

The findings show that the three variables measured—Workplace Innovation, Knowledge Management, and Employee Performance—were all rated highly collectively by rank-and-file restaurant staff, indicating evidence of strong innovative participation, effective knowledge processes, and favorable work outcomes.

3.2. Workplace Innovation, Knowledge Management, and Employee Performance Tables

Table 1. Level of Workplace Innovation, Knowledge Management, and Employee Performance among Rank-and-File Restaurant Employees.

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
<i>Idea Generation</i>	0.76	4.16	High
<i>Idea Championing</i>	0.84	4.09	High
<i>Idea Implementation</i>	0.82	4.11	High
Workplace Innovation	0.60	4.08	High
<i>Knowledge Creation</i>	0.66	4.08	High
<i>Knowledge Transfer</i>	0.71	4.13	High
<i>Knowledge Embedding</i>	0.75	4.09	High
Knowledge Management		4.10	High
<i>Efficiency of the Work</i>	0.71	4.21	Very high
<i>Planning the Work</i>			

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<i>Creativity and Innovation</i>	0.74	4.15	High
<i>Making Efforts</i>			High
Employee Performance	0.70	3.95	High
	0.76	4.01	
		4.08	High

For Workplace Innovation, the general average was 4.08 (SD = 0.60), with Idea Generation receiving the highest score (M = 4.16, SD = 0.76), followed by Idea Implementation (M = Knowledge Management had a general mean of 4.10, where Knowledge Transfer was rated the highest (M = 4.13, SD = 0.71), then Knowledge Embedding (M = 4.09, SD = 0.75) and Knowledge Creation (M = 4.08, SD = 0.66). This reflects a high level of information-sharing culture, idea-sharing, and a shared problem-solving culture.

Employee Performance was also high, with a mean rating of 4.08. The most highly rated dimension was Efficiency of the Work (M = 4.21, SD = 0.71, Very High), followed by Planning the Work (M = 4.15, SD = 0.74),

4.11, SD = 0.82) and Idea Championing (M = 4.09, SD = 0.84). Employees were most engaged in exploring new ways of working and in efforts to generate new ideas.

Efforts (M = 4.01, SD = 0.76), and Creativity and Innovation (M = 3.95, SD = 0.70). The findings indicate that efficiency is a strong area, while creativity in performance is an area that could be improved further.

This finding is consistent with prior research (Jankelová et al., 2021; Černe et al., 2022; Kankam-Kwarteng et al., 2022), which suggests that in service industries, employee performance, knowledge management, and workplace innovation are interconnected drivers of an organization's competitiveness.

Table 2. Correlation between Variables

Variables Correlated with Employee Performance	R	p-value	Remarks
<i>Workplace Innovation</i>	.71**	.00	Significant
<i>Knowledge Management</i>	.75**	.00	Significant

As indicated in Table 2, the correlation analysis revealed statistically significant and positive correlations at the $p < .05$ level. Workplace innovation was moderately correlated with employee performance ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$), whereas knowledge management was more strongly correlated ($r = 0.75$, $p < 0.01$). The results suggest that enhancements in either variable are associated with an improved level of employee performance.

The findings highlighted that both workplace innovation and knowledge management were significant factors that influenced employee performance in the restaurant industry. The positive correlation between workplace innovation and employee performance supports

the findings of Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle (2011), who asserted that innovation practices enhance employee competencies and organizational adaptability. Similarly, Shipton et al. (2013) emphasised that an innovative work environment fosters learning, engagement, and proactive behaviour, all of which contribute to enhanced performance.

The higher correlation with knowledge management accentuates the strategic significance of information-sharing processes within service industries. Access to relevant organizational knowledge not only facilitates problem-solving but also enhances collaboration, professional development, and operational consistency. These results are

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consistent with Al-Shammari & Al-Saleh (2018), who established that the utilization of knowledge management is positively related to employee job satisfaction, a recognized antecedent of high performance.

Although the size of the correlations is large, they do not prove causality. Additionally, using self-report information may introduce common method bias, which can artificially inflate the correlation coefficients. One limitation is the use of cross-sectional data that limits inference regarding temporal or causal directionality. In addition, relying solely on employee self-ratings

without triangulation with supervisors' or performance measures decreases the objectivity of the results.

However, the findings provide empirical support for the notion that organizational investment in workplace innovation and knowledge management systems can enhance worker productivity, particularly in service-intensive environments such as restaurants. Future research would be helped by the use of longitudinal data and multi-source measures to confirm these associations more conclusively.

Table 3. Influencers of Employee Performance

Variables	B	p-value	t	Remarks
Workplace Innovation	.39	.00	8.44	Significant
Knowledge Management	.50	.00	10.89	Significant
$r^2 = 64.1$				
$p = .00$				
$F = 268.18$				

Table 5 presents the findings of the multiple regression analysis used to determine the influence of workplace innovation and knowledge management on employee performance. The analysis revealed that both predictors significantly contribute to employee performance, with workplace innovation showing a standardized beta coefficient (β) of .39 ($p = .00$) and knowledge management a beta of .50 ($p = .00$). These findings indicate that, all else being equal, a one-unit increase in workplace innovation is associated with a .39-unit increase in employee performance. In contrast, a one-unit increase in knowledge management corresponds to a .50-unit increase in the same. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.641$) indicates that the combined effect of the two variables accounts for 64.1% of the variance in employee performance. The model's F-value of 268.18 and the overall p-value of .00 confirm the model's statistical significance.

The regression results confirm that both workplace innovation and knowledge management are statistically significant and

practically meaningful predictors of employee performance. The more substantial influence of knowledge management ($\beta = .50$) may suggest that systematic access to and sharing of institutional knowledge equips employees with the tools necessary to meet performance expectations more effectively.

These results are consistent with those of Han and Song (2019), who found that workplace innovation enhances employee learning and task execution by fostering adaptability and self-efficacy. Similarly, Davenport and Prusak (1998) emphasised the role of knowledge management in enhancing performance through the timely exchange of information, collaborative workflows, and organisational learning.

Importantly, the results reflect the underlying principles of the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which posits that internal resources—particularly intangible ones, such as innovation capacity and intellectual capital—can

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serve as sources of sustained competitive advantage. As Omotayo (2015) and Ketchen et al. (2014) highlight, employees' ability to innovate and manage knowledge transforms organizations by converting resources into performance outputs.

While the model explains 64.1% of the variance in employee performance, 35.9% remains unexplained, indicating that other potential contributors, such as leadership style,

organizational climate, motivation, and external market factors, may also play a role.

Additionally, the use of self-reported data introduces potential biases such as social desirability or standard method variance. Future research should triangulate performance data with managerial assessments or objective performance metrics for greater validity. A longitudinal design may also offer insight into causal dynamics over time.

3.3. Formatting of Mathematical Components

Hypothesis 1. A significant positive correlation exists between employee performance and workplace innovation among rank-and-file restaurant workers in Davao City.

Proof of Hypothesis 1.

According to Table 1, workplace innovation measures, such as Idea Generation ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.76$), Idea Championing ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.84$), and Idea Implementation ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.82$), all received high descriptive ratings. Likewise, employee performance metrics such as Efficiency of Work ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.71$) and Planning the Work ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.74$) also posted high to very high scores. These high ratings affirm the hypothesis that positive correlation exists between employee performance and workplace innovation.

Hypothesis 2. A significant positive correlation exists between knowledge management and employee performance among rank-and-file restaurant workers in Davao City.

Proof of Hypothesis 2.

Knowledge management metrics, such as Knowledge Creation ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.66$), Knowledge Transfer ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.71$), and Knowledge Embedding ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.75$), received high descriptive scores. The congruence of these high ratings with employee performance ratings of the same level validates the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which posits that effective knowledge management enhances resource utilization capabilities, ultimately leading to improved employee performance.

4. Conclusion

The research results emphasize the important role that knowledge management and workplace innovation play in improving employee performance in the restaurant industry of Davao City. According to the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory (Barney, 1991), the results highlight that intangible assets, such as employees' ability to innovate and manage knowledge, are strategic assets with the potential to enhance organizational performance.

Workplace innovation was also a significant predictor of performance, as employees demonstrated high engagement in generating, championing, and implementing new ideas. This result is consistent with earlier studies by Jankelová et al. (2021) and Černe et al. (2022), who highlighted the importance of innovation capabilities in service industries. The active creation of new approaches and solutions would seem to suit the fast-paced nature of the

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restaurant industry, where agility and imagination play a critical role.

Knowledge management was a slightly better predictor of staff performance, as suggested by Davenport and Prusak (1998), who noted that rigorous knowledge sharing and use enhance decision-making, efficiency, and teamwork. Staff whose ability to create, transfer, and embed knowledge achieves high levels not only contributes to easier operation processes but also supports long-term service quality, an essential competitive differentiator.

The high explanatory power of the model ($R^2 = 64.1\%$) suggests that these two variables

together account for a substantial portion of the variance in performance. The remaining unexplained variance, however, suggests the presence of other organizational and individual variables—such as leadership style, motivation, or organizational culture—which warrant further investigation. Practically speaking, the findings suggest the importance of investing in formal innovation programs and robust knowledge management systems. Restaurants seeking to enhance employee performance should create an environment that fosters creative thinking, facilitates cross-functional knowledge sharing, and values contributions that improve service delivery.

5. Conclusions

This research presents empirical evidence that job innovation and knowledge management have a positive and significant impact on the performance of rank-and-file workers in restaurants in Davao City. Although both concepts are significant, knowledge management showed a modestly larger effect, suggesting that the capacity to tap and utilize institutional knowledge may be especially vital in enhancing operational efficiency and service quality.

Based on the RBV theoretical framework, the findings confirm that intangible assets—namely those inherent in employees' skills, creativity, and knowledge-sharing behavior—may serve as the foundation of a long-term competitive advantage.

The implications are twofold:

- For practitioners, restaurant managers must incorporate formal knowledge management practices with innovation efforts to enhance employee productivity and flexibility.
- For researchers, this research reaffirms the imperative for further research on the synergies between innovation and knowledge management, particularly in rapidly changing service environments.

These findings lay the groundwork for the following discussion of this research's limitations and potential avenues for further research.

6. Limitations of the Study

Despite this research providing valuable insights into the intersections of workplace innovation, knowledge management, and employee performance among regular employees in Davao

City's restaurant industry, several limitations should be noted.

To begin with, this study was based largely on self-reported information, which is prone to social desirability bias and self-perceived

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ratings. The respondents may have exaggerated their innovation practices or performance ratings to conform to perceived norms.

Second, the study employed a cross-sectional design, measuring employee attitudes at a single point in time. Such a design does not allow for the establishment of causal relationships between knowledge management, workplace innovation, and employee performance. A longitudinal design would be more suitable for observing changes and causality over time.

Third, the spatial coverage was geographically constrained to Davao City, enabling a detailed, context-oriented analysis but limiting generalizability to other regions or cultural settings with divergent organizational practices and employee relationships.

Fourth, the research was limited to rank-and-file workers alone, without incorporating insights

from managerial and supervisory ranks. These insights may offer interesting perspectives on the strategic sharing of knowledge and leadership in innovation.

Lastly, although the survey instrument underwent validation, there remains a risk of construct underrepresentation or measurement error, particularly for intangible concepts such as creativity and knowledge-sharing culture.

Future studies should aim to overcome these limitations by employing multi-source data collection methods (e.g., integrating surveys with interviews and objective performance data), increasing the sample size to encompass multiple geographic areas, and utilizing mixed-methods or longitudinal designs to enhance the robustness and richness of the results.

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