

# The mediating role of customer knowledge management on the innovative work behavior and product innovation relationship

Role of  
customer  
knowledge  
management

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of the present research is to introduce a combined framework that integrates innovative work behavior, product innovation process and customer knowledge management; then, to explore the mediating effect of customer knowledge management in the relationship between innovative work behavior and the product innovation process.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The basis for the present research is a cross-sectional design. Data collection from 154 employees occurred using the following structured questionnaires: Customer Knowledge Management (CKM), Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) and Product Innovation Process (PIP). Data processing used SPSS version 26.0, including the PROCESS (3.5) macro analysis.

**Findings** – The results show positive relationships between innovative work behavior and the product innovation process ( $r = 0.420, p < 0.01$ ). Pearson's correlation shows a coefficient of 0.42, meaning that 42% of the variations in perceived product innovation are due to variations in innovative work behavior. The second condition of the mediation test involved testing the relationship between the independent variable (Innovative Work Behavior) and the mediating variable (Knowledge Management) and showed a significant relationship ( $r = 0.272, p < 0.01$ ). The findings suggested that knowledge management that other determinants supported, such as collaboration in idea exploration, idea championing and encouragement of participation in idea implementation, significantly contributed to the product innovation process ( $r = 0.509, p < 0.01$ ). The bootstrapping method confirmed that innovative work behavior supports product innovation through the mediation of customer knowledge management ( $z = 3.01, p = 0.002$ ).

**Research limitations/implications** – The cross-sectional design, along with the relatively low number of participants and the self-reporting nature of the questionnaires, represent the current study's main limitations. Developing the research model could integrate new variables, such as customer co-creation processes, performance-based compensation, employee citizenship activities and transformational leadership.

**Practical implications** – This research has both theoretical and practical implications. These emphasize the importance of further investigation into the factors influencing companies' innovation processes. They also provide managers with a means of finding a fit between the deployment of customer knowledge mechanisms and the achievement of innovative workplace behavior, to improve innovation process efficiency.

**Originality/value** – The current study broadens the empirical research area of customer knowledge management and its impact on both innovative work behavior and the product innovation process, particularly in knowledge-intensive market scenarios that require organizations to be innovative.

**Keywords** Customer knowledge management, Innovative work behavior, Product innovation process, Mediation

**Paper type** Research paper

