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IMPLICIT THEORIES OF INNOVATIVENESS: CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report is to provide empirical evidence of the role of culture and individual values play in people's attitudes to innovation in different cultural and regional groups with particular focus on Russian regions. The main goal of the researches was the analysis of how cultural diversity and individual values may drive creativity and innovation.

2489 participants from 3 countries, 5 federal districts of Russian federation and 8 ethnocultural groups took part in these studies. The findings of the researches presented in these working papers provide the results that can serve as both empirical and theoretical backdrops for the SEARCH project and ENP policy for implementation of innovations in different cultural and regional surroundings.

MAIN RESULTS

Working paper 5.2.1 (N.Lebedeva and P.Schmidt '**VALUES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS INNOVATION AMONG CANADIAN, CHINESE AND RUSSIAN STUDENTS**') presents the study, which investigated relations of basic personal values to attitudes towards innovation among students in Russia, Canada, and China (N=450). The paper compares and analyses the levels of innovative activity in these three countries and gives a short review of the researchers on the relationships between cultural values and creativity/innovations. Participants completed a questionnaire that included the SVS measure of values (Schwartz, 1992) and a new measure of attitudes towards innovation (Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2009). There were significant cultural and gender-related differences in value priorities and innovative attitudes among the Canadian, Russian, and Chinese college students. As hypothesized, across the full set of participants, if higher priority was given to Openness to change values (self-direction, stimulation) this was related to positive attitudes toward innovation whereas higher priority given to Conservation values (conformity, security) was related negatively to attitude toward innovation. This result is compatible with the findings reported by other researchers (Shane, 1992, 1995; Dollinger, Burke & Gump, 2007). There were, however, culture-specific variations in some of these associations, which may be explained by cultural differences in value priorities or meanings and in implicit theories of creativity and innovation. Applying the Multiple-Group Multiple Indicators Multiple Causes Model (MGMIMIC) there

has been found that the type of mediation between socio demographic factors and Innovation is different in the three countries. Whereas in Russia and Canada the effects of gender and age are fully mediated by the values, this is not true for China, where a direct effect of gender on innovation was found. The cultural differences in values, implicit theories of innovation, and their consequences for attitudes to innovation are finally discussed. The empirical evidence that there are culturally specific relations of values with attitudes about innovation highlights the fact that we must consider specific features of a culture when introducing innovative patterns to it.

Working paper 5.2.2 (N. Lebedeva, E. Osipova and L. Cherkasova '**VALUES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL AS PREDICTORS OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS INNOVATION**') presents the results of a large survey which has been conducted in four federal districts of Russian Federation (Central, North Caucasus, Far East, Volga). The study examines the relationship of values and social capital with attitudes towards innovations. The respondents (N = 1238) were asked to fill in a questionnaire, which included the Schwartz value survey SVS-57, a self assessment scale of innovative personality traits [Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2009], and a method of assessing social capital [Tatarko, 2011]. The results of the correlation analysis revealed a positive correlation between values of Openness to Change and a positive attitude to innovation. It was also found that the components of social capital (trust, tolerance, perceived social capital) positively correlated with attitudes to innovation. The empirical model obtained by means of a structural equation modeling generally confirmed the hypothesis of the study and demonstrated the positive impact of the values of Openness to Change and perceived social capital on attitudes towards innovations in Russia. The strong relationship of the value of Openness to Change with the attitude towards innovation is indicative of the need for creating conditions to form the given value as a powerful value-motivational basis of individual creativity and innovativeness.

In this model, perceived social capital performs to some degree the function of a mediator. Trust relationships in the group, both directly and indirectly through the value of Openness to Change, promote the adoption and support for innovation. Thus, this empirical study proves once again that the socio-cultural context and the dominant values in society play a significant role in attitudes to innovation, and it is essential to take them into account while designing and implementing innovation policies at any level.

Working paper 5.2.3 (N. Lebedeva and L. Grigoryan '**VALUES AND IMPLICIT THEORIES OF INNOVATIVENESS: CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS**') presents the findings of the study, which revealed and examined cultural differences in values, implicit theories of innovativeness and attitudes to innovation as well as their interrelations across three ethnocultural groups of Russia: Ethnic Russians, representatives of the peoples of North Caucasus: Ingush and Chechens, and Tuvins (N = 801). Participants completed a modified adjective checklist to measure their implicit theories of the characteristics of innovators (Runco et al., 1993), the SVS to measure values (Schwartz, 1992), and a scale of attitudes to innovation (Lebedeva & Tatarko, 2009). It has been revealed that Ethnic Russians predominantly share individual theories of innovativeness, whereas among the respondents from North Caucasus and Tuva the social theories of innovativeness are more widespread. Using structural equation modeling a culturally universal model of values' effects was identified – direct and mediated by implicit theories of innovativeness – on attitudes

to innovation. The study demonstrates how the direct negative impact of Conservation values on positive attitudes to innovation is transformed into positive impact, promoting the acceptance of innovations, through the mediating role of implicit theories of innovativeness. The current research study sheds light on the important mediating role of implicit theories of innovativeness on the impact of individual values on attitudes to innovation in different cultures, which consists in converting the direct negative impact of Conservation values on attitudes to innovation into positive impact mediated by implicit theories of innovativeness. The psychological explanation of this effect is obvious: according to Rudowicz (2003), the scope of modification, adaptation and renovation depends on how much threat is posed to the established social, religious or political order. So we may suppose that in societies where people value tradition, security, conformity (values of Conservation in the Schwartz 'model) any innovation can cause fear, anxiety and mistrust, therefore it is obvious, that values of Conservation are negatively connected with acceptance of innovation. When Social implicit theories of innovativeness (regarding innovators as honest, trusted toward people, respect for authority), interplay as mediator between values and attitudes to innovations, they become a 'narrow corridor' through which the innovation can pass and be accepted by the conservative society. So, attribution to the innovators socially desirable qualities can serve as a real chance for innovation to be welcomed in traditional societies. It is interesting that such socially desirable threats of innovators are implicit ones, i.e. implanted in a system of beliefs of members of the given societies that reflects the deeply rooted aspiration of human societies not only to preservation, but also to updating. This study disclosed a culturally universal model of influence of values through implicit theories of innovativeness on attitudes to innovation. This indicates that innovative human behavior is conditioned not only by one's attitudes toward innovation, but also by the culture in which one was socialized and learned values and implicit theories of innovativeness. The study exposed the important mediating role of implicit theories of innovativeness on the effect of Conservation values on attitudes to innovation, transforming the typically negative effect of Conservation values into a positive one. The notion that an innovator must possess socially oriented qualities (trust toward people, honesty, obedience, respect for authority) can contribute to acceptance of innovations, and this is important to consider when planning and implementing innovations in traditional societies.