THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL SUPPORT ON THE ADOPTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INNOVATIONS: A PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

By

MILLICENT FAYE NELSON

Bachelor of Science
Lane College
Jackson, Tennessee
1977

Master of Business Administration
Atlanta University
Atlanta, Georgia
1979

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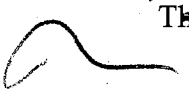
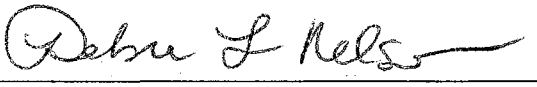
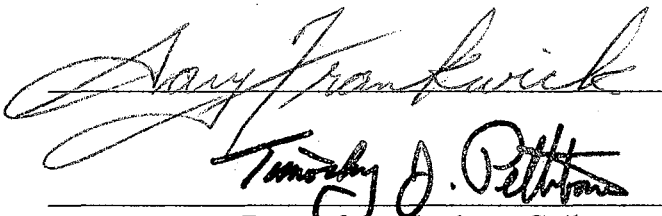
Thesis Approved:

Thesis Adviser







Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TO GOD BE THE GLORY! I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my mother, Hattie Mosley Nelson, and my brother, John Wesley Nelson. My mother provided the love and support that only one who is inspired by God can do. She was the rock that gave me my foundation and the compass that kept me on course. She continues to influence my thoughts and actions as I strive to be the daughter she was so proud of. My brother was my inspiration, always interested in learning something more. I completed the journey he started towards receiving the Ph.D.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The success of organizations in the new millennium will depend on their ability to remain competitive. Some of the challenges organizations must manage in order to remain competitive are globalization, technology, ethical behavior, and the management of human resources (Harper, 1992; Mitchell and Scott, 1990). Each is the consequence of a changing environment due to economic, sociological, political, and legal changes. Organizations must be able to adapt to their environment and find new ways to manage continuous change.

Continuous change requires organizations to constantly develop new ideas as solutions to new and sometimes old problems. Organizations that do not change will more likely stagnate and not survive in the new millennium. Although stability in organizations is important, an ongoing process of evaluating new information and implementing new ideas must also exist. Van De Ven (1986) called this process of developing and implementing new ideas innovation.

Many organizational innovations result from the problem solving efforts of its employees. The ability of individuals within the organization to solve problems may be crucial to its' survival. When faced with problems, people turn to others as one of their sources for information. People are influenced by their relationships with others; therefore the social relationship between people may be instrumental in the decision that is made. The relationship between the person who knows about an innovation and the one who does not yet know should influence the conditions under which the former will

tell the latter. This relationship should also influence decisions that are consequently made about the innovation.

Although not all innovations are the result of pending problems, this research is limited to those innovations that result from a situation in which the decision-maker has a problem and is uncertain how to resolve the dilemma. The person who has a problem interacts with another who is aware of an innovation that may resolve the problem. The person with the problem is unaware of the innovation, but he/she does have the decision making power to determine the merit of the innovation.

An employee behavior that may prove beneficial in understanding when an innovation is adopted is social support. Social support is defined as the resources a person receives, actual or perceived, that increase the well-being of the receiver (McIntosh, 1991). This definition is based on the assumption that people must rely on one another to meet certain needs. When people have problems they often seek help from other people (Barbee et al., 1993). Since social support helps us to understand social interactions and relationships among people, it should also explain the social linkages in the innovation process.

Previous researchers have mostly limited the capabilities of social support to assisting one to cope (Thoits, 1986). Patients with terminal illnesses, such as cancer and AIDS, report a more positive outlook on life when they have social support. Circumstances bring about different needs at various times and the availability of assistance from another is sometimes an integral part of coping with life events. This research, however, proposes that the benefits of social support go beyond coping.

The interpersonal aspects of organizational innovation have been mainly ignored in the literature. No articles addressing the behavioral aspects of innovation were included in the *Academy of Management Journal* (1996) special issue on innovations and organizations. An interaction between two people occurs when social support is provided. Likewise, the person to person sharing of information about an innovation involves a process of social interactions. The purpose of this research is to utilize social support to investigate the interpersonal aspects of problem solving during the innovation process.

Most research on innovation has focused on the adoption or diffusion of innovations (Abrahamson, 1991; Abrahamson and Rosenkopf, 1993; Rogers, 1962; 1995). Rogers (1962) defined the diffusion process as the spread of a new idea from the initial awareness of an innovation to its adoption by users. The essence of the diffusion process is the human interaction in which one person communicates a new idea to another person. Thus, at its most elemental level of conceptualization, the diffusion process consists of 1) a new idea, 2) a person who knows about the innovation, and 3) a person who has need of this information, but does not know about the innovation (Rogers, 1962).

Numerous authors have argued (Pfeffer, 1995; Capelli and Crocker-Hefter, 1996; Hitt, Keats, and DeMarie, 1998) that human resource (HR) policies, practices and methods can create a source of competitive advantage for organizations that is difficult to replicate. Specifically, this research focuses on the adoption of innovations for human resource management (HRM) functions since the way a company manages its workforce could determine whether it will be able to establish and maintain a competitive advantage (Huselid, 1995; Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Becker and Gerhart, 1996).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Innovations

Damanpour (1991) in a meta-analytic review of organizational innovations described the field of innovation as extensive and therefore requiring a definition that would include innovations from all aspects of the organization. He defined innovation as a product, service, process, program, or device that is new to the organization adopting or implementing it. Another view of organizational innovation is the first time use of a new product, service, or idea (Mansfield, 1963). This perspective is similar to the concept of invention where the originator creates a new product or service, not previously known by any other user. Some of the ideas implemented in organizations may indeed be inventions; however for the purposes of this research any idea, product, service, program, or device not formerly implemented in the organization will be considered an innovation (Kossek, 1987).

Traditionally, the research question asked in most studies on innovation is "what are the determinants of the adoption of a given innovation." Previous organizational innovation research has been generally confined to three areas: 1) the spread or diffusion of an innovation; 2) the determinants of innovativeness; and 3) the process of innovation (Wolfe, 1994). Research on diffusion has typically tried to understand what factors affect the rate of diffusion of innovations, while previous research on the determinants of innovativeness focused on the difference between early and late adopters (Abrahamson,

1991). Process research focused on changes in an organization's technology and has expanded its perspective to identify and investigate the stages of innovation, as well as to describe the conditions, which facilitate innovative processes (Ettlie, 1992). None of these areas of research provides any explanation for individual behavioral effects during the innovation process.

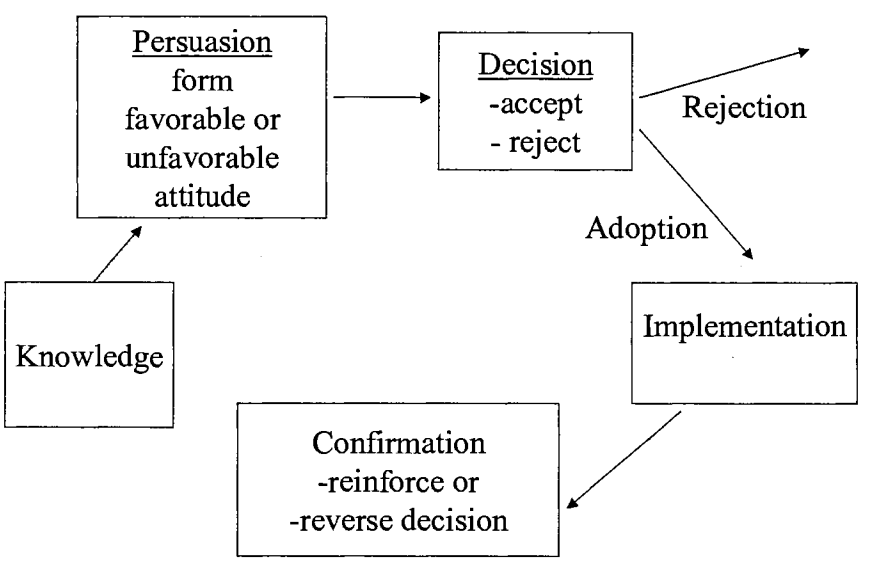
In spite of the various approaches to examining innovation, no general theory of innovation exists in the current literature (Drazin and Schoonhoven, 1996). Downs and Mohr (1976) suggested that there is no theory of innovation because of conceptual and methodical issues. They argued that many conceptual problems occur when considering whether primary or secondary attributes of innovations should be utilized in theory building. Primary attributes are those that are inherent in an innovation, while secondary attributes are those that could vary from organization to organization, such as routine versus radical, or major versus minor innovations. Secondary attributes should be used in the innovative-decision design to determine the circumstances influencing a decision to innovate (Downs and Mohr, 1976).

Rogers (1962, 1995) used secondary attributes and developed an innovative-decision design that describes the innovation process. An individual goes from knowledge of an innovation, to forming an attitude about the innovation, to a decision to accept or reject the innovation, to implementation of the innovation, and finally to confirmation of the decision. (See Figure 1.) Knowledge occurs when the individual becomes aware of the innovation and has some general information about its use. Based on his/her limited knowledge of the innovation, the individual forms a favorable or unfavorable opinion in the persuasion stage. During the decision stage, the individual

gathers additional information about the innovation that leads to a decision to adopt or reject the innovation. If adoption is the choice, then the next step is the implementation of the innovation. Generally, implementation is conducted on a limited basis as a trial and the results of this trial, as well as other feedback, provides the basis for the last stage, confirmation. During the confirmation stage, the individual may use positive feedback as validation to implement the innovation on a larger scale, or negative feedback to discontinue implementation.

Innovations have generally been viewed as a way of changing the organization for the better or improving its effectiveness (Damanpour, 1991). Typically, most people believe that innovations are adopted when they are good and rejected when they are bad. This perspective is called efficient-choice and assumes that decision-makers only choose to adopt and implement effective innovations. In reality, some innovations that are

Figure 1. Roger's Innovation Decision Process



adopted and implemented are later withdrawn due to their ineffectiveness or lack or organizational support. Abrahamson (1991) also argued that the efficient choice perspective is flawed and that it restricts or at least limits research on ineffective choices of innovations. Although the objective is the adoption and implementation of effective innovations, a good innovation may be rejected or a bad one adopted. During the innovation process, others will influence the innovator and may affect his/her decision to adopt or reject an innovation. This study will focus, not on the effectiveness of the choice for innovation, but rather the behavior and attitudes that lead to a choice.

Human Resource Management Innovation

Human resource management innovation (HRMI) is defined as an idea, policy, program, practice, or system that is related to the human resource management (HRM) function and is new to the adopting organization (Kossek, 1989; Wolfe, 1995). Wolfe (1995) categorized HRM as having six functions: recruiting and selection; appraisal; training and development; rewards and benefits; organizational design; and communication. A few examples are forecasting the number of job candidates needed for various positions, advertising and recruiting for those positions, as well as the selection of the best candidate. Also, other traditional employee-related tasks such as pay, compensation, and labor relations are considered HRM functions. In addition, organizational characteristics, such as the design and structure of work are also functions of HRM.

Some researchers have classified HRMI as administrative innovations because they occur within the social system of the organization (Tannnebaum and Dupuree-

Bruno, 1994; Wolfe, 1995). These researchers do not consider technological innovations a part of HRMIs. While it is true that most administrative innovations are intangible and unable to be measured using traditional means such as cost-benefit analyses; many technological innovations are directly related to HRM functions. For example, computer based training (CBT), computer based ads, Internet recruiting and the company Intranet are just a few of the ways HRM effectively utilizes technology.

Stone, Templer, and Nelson (2002) argue that omitting technological innovations from HRM limits the view of HR as being only related to the people aspect of the organization. Likewise, Van de Ven (1986) and Nohria and Gulati (1996) concurred that separating technical and administrative innovations results in a fragmented categorization of the innovation process. In reality, the components of the organization (i.e., people, technology, structure, and task) make up a system with parts interrelated such that a change in one component has an effect on every other component.

Limited research has focused on the relationship of HRMIs to organizational performance (Huselid, 1995). However, most previous research has investigated the impact of various HRM practices, such as training (Delaney and Huselid, 1996), rewards (Welbourne and Andrews, 1996), and staffing (Terpstra and Rozell, 1993; Delaney and Huselid, 1996) on organizational performance. A few studies have also examined high involvement work practices, which are described as new work practices and includes contemporary HRM functions (Huselid, 1995; Pill and MacDuffie, 1996). For example, Pill and MacDuffie (1996) conducted a longitudinal study (using 2 time frames) at automobile assembly plants to investigate why high-involvement work practices are adopted more rapidly by some organizations than by others. They concluded that

organizations are more likely to adopt high involvement work practices if they have already adopted complementary HRM practices such as criteria for selection, contingent compensation, and training. In addition, Huselid (1995) used a national sample of nearly one thousand firms to investigate the relationship of high involvement practices to financial performance. He found that investments in high involvement work practices, such as personnel selection and performance appraisal, yielded lower employee turnover and greater financial performance.

Research has also been conducted to determine some of the factors influencing HRMI. Kossek (1989) conducted a study to examine varying reactions to HR innovations and determine factors related to multiple innovations. She investigated the effects of hierarchical level, gender, seniority, program experience, and organizational unit has on six HR innovations: quality circles, flextime, flexible benefits, job posting, cash awards, and a fitness program. Her results indicated hierarchical level and seniority were better predictors of acceptance of innovation than gender and business unit. Also, officers and managers were more accepting of innovations than non-managers.

A limited amount of research has also considered the personality of adopters as a factor in the effective implementation of HRMIs (Howell and Higgins, 1990; Janssen, De Vries, and Cozijnsen, 1998) This research has potential for understanding interpersonal relations in innovation because it recognizes the importance of individual differences in the innovation process. Despite the diversity in innovation research, none of the previous studies investigated how social relationships among employees impact the adoption of HRMIs.

Social Support

Shumaker and Brownell (1984) defined social support as an exchange of resources by two individuals, a giver and a receiver, to increase the well being of the receiver. Likewise, McIntosh (1991) defined social support as the resources a person receives, actual or perceived, that increase the sense of well being of the receiver. Early research focused on the types of social support individuals received from others. The receipt of social support is related to positive outcomes (Hupcey, 1998; Richman, Rosenfeld, and Brown, 1998). Researchers generally agree that social support increases the well being of the one receiving it.

House (1981) classified social support as four types of supportive behaviors or acts: emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. Emotional support is defined as behaviors that show care for the employees and their work (House, 1981). Listening, providing empathy, and showing concern are acts of emotional support. Some typologies have also referred to emotional support as affective or esteem support (Cohen and Willis, 1985). Instrumental support is opposite on the spectrum from emotional support. Instrumental support involves acts that directly help employees, such as modifying the work environment or performing some task such as filing papers or preparing a report (House, 1981). Instrumental support has also been referred to as tangible aid, which involves providing material assistance for specific needs (Cohen and Willis, 1985). Other examples of instrumental social support include practical forms of support such as help with personal care or household chores, and financial assistance (Chen and Silverstein, 2000).

Informational support means providing a person with information that can be used to handle personal and environmental problems (House, 1981). Informational support, unlike instrumental support, involves providing employees with information that they can use to help themselves (House, 1981). Examples of informational support include advice, guidance, suggestions, directives and information. Appraisal support, like informational support, is characterized by giving information, however, the information is given for self-evaluation (House, 1981). Appraisal support is given as feedback, an affirmation, or for social comparison rather than the affect involved in emotional support or the aid involved in instrumental support. Other people are sources of information that individuals use in evaluating themselves. The relevance of the source and types of support is dependent upon the persons involved and the kind of support required by them.

A large body of research has examined the relationship between stress and social support. Social support has traditionally been associated with health and stress in the literature in three ways (Dormann and Zapf, 1999). First, social support has been shown to have a direct effect on stress and health, such that when there is more social support there is also less stress. In addition, when people receive more social support they are less likely to have mental or physical ill-health. Secondly, social support has been shown to have an indirect (mediating) effect on health. Social support reduces stress and less stress leads to positive health outcomes, such as lower blood pressure and improved mental health (Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Lastly, some studies have found that social support has a buffering (moderating) effect on the relationship between stressors and strains (Hagihara, Tarum, and Miller, 1998). When there is a high amount

of social support, the stressor-strain relationship is low and when there is a low amount of social support, the stressor-strain relationship is high.

Social support has also been instrumental to understanding health, mortality, and coping with illnesses. Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser (1996) conducted a review of 81 studies linking social support with physiological processes, such as cardiovascular, endocrine, and immune systems. They found that higher levels of social support are associated with lower blood pressure, better functioning of the immune system, and decreased levels of catecholamines (to reduce stress) in the endocrine system.

Several studies have also investigated the relationship of social support to the elderly (Chen and Silverstein, 2000; Martire, Schulz, Mittelmark, and Newson, 1999). Chen and Silverstein (2000) utilized a sample of Chinese parents to investigate whether intergenerational exchanges of social support influence older parents' morale. Their findings revealed that parents' psychological well-being was improved when they could provide instrumental support to their children. In another study of older adults, social support from family and friends was found to be stable over time as individuals aged (Martire et al., 1999). In addition, there was a slight increase over time in support that was attributed to sickness and the need for assistance.

One study also found social support contributed to better interpersonal relationships. Pasch and Bradbury (1998) conducted a laboratory study of newly married couples during two time periods (as newlyweds and twenty four months later) to investigate the effect of social support and conflict. They found that couples that initially exhibited poor problem solving skills and also failed to exchange social support were at

risk for later development of marital distress. In contrast, couples who provided social support to each other had martial satisfaction.

Recently, a limited number of studies investigated the effect of social support in the workplace. A longitudinal study to examine the relationship between job characteristics and psychological well-being found that job demands and social support influenced job satisfaction (Jonge, Dormann, Janssen, Dollard, Landeweerd, and Nijhuis, 2001). Ducharme and Martin (2000) also concluded that emotional and instrumental social support contributed to the job satisfaction of full-time workers.

Previous social support research has focused primarily on its emotional component. House (1981) suggested that most people think of social support as emotional support. The emotional component emphasizes listening and showing concern. Since most of the studies dealt with morbidity, illness, or health related disorders, such as stress, it is no surprise that the emotional component would have the most significant effects. Persons who have health related problems generally have doctors and other sources for information. In addition, the ability of a social support provider to give direct assistance or feedback would be limited for illnesses or health related problems. Listening and showing concern may be the only means for a social support provider to contribute to the wellness of the recipient. These acts provide support for coping with problems.

Coping techniques are different from problem solving. The former occurs when cognition and behavior are changed in an effort to manage demands such that there is less stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Although coping can be categorized as emotion-focused or problem-focused, those behaviors considered as problem-focused do not

necessarily include eliminating the problem. In fact, problem-focused behavior includes activities such as "shifting the level of aspiration, reducing ego involvement, and finding alternative channels of gratification" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Social support could also be beneficial for problems that are not health-related and of a less personal nature. Previous research has not fully explored the impact of social support in a problem-solving situation. This area has become the "black box" in social support research. This research investigates the importance of providing information to solve environmental problems and utilizing social support for problems that are not health-related.

The Problem Solving Approach

Problem solving is defined as an activity that is undertaken under conditions of uncertainty with the goal of removing or circumventing an obstacle (Tallman, Leik, Gray, and Stafford, 1993). Problems are barriers to attaining a desired goal where there is some doubt about the means to overcome the obstacle, as well as the outcome of using any particular means (Tallman and Gray, 1990). Problem solving therefore, is a process used for nonroutine events and is successful if it overcomes the goal-impeding barrier. Implicit in the definition of problem solving is a process that requires making change and making a choice between alternative courses of action. While coping involves responses to change the mental state (e.g., adjusting, rationalizing, accepting, etc.), problem solving is used to change or eliminate a problematic situation.

Problem solving theories have been divided into three categories in previous research. One category emphasizes the coping mechanisms people use to reduce stressors when confronted with problem situations (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Pearlin and

Schooler, 1978). Another category focuses on conflict resolution during one on one or group interactions. This area of research emphasizes understanding the motives and/or actions of others to determine the course of action to take for a solution. And finally, a third category of research is concerned with the cognitive aspects of problem solving that occur during information processing (Kahney, 1986; Mayer, 1983). Each of these approaches attempts to explain what is required to solve problems effectively rather than the behavior of people during problem solving.

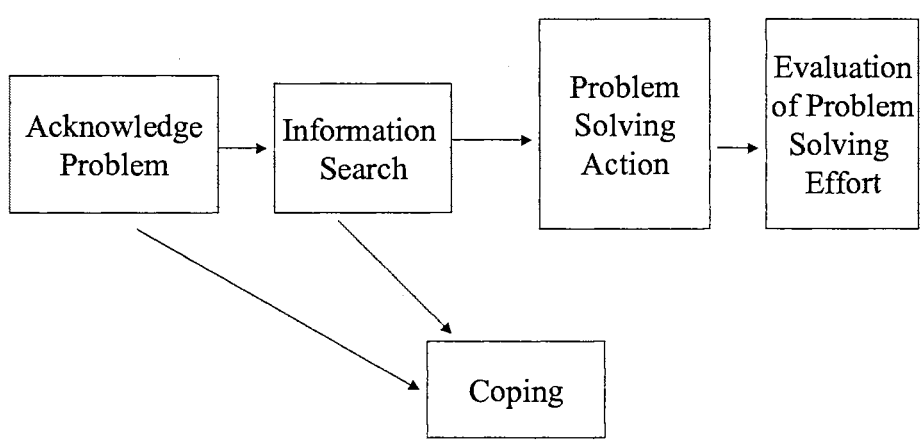
On the other hand, the theory of problem solving behavior (Tallman et al., 1993) addresses the process of problem solving by explaining how a person becomes aware of a problem, and addressing when and why people choose certain actions to solve a problem. The theory of problem solving behavior also differentiates between coping with a problem and solving it. As shown in Figure 2, the first step in the problem solving behavior model is acknowledging the problem. At this stage an individual becomes aware of an issue that is preventing him/her from attaining a desired objective. The individual can, upon awareness of this problem, decide to adjust his/her situation to deal with it or find some other means of coping.

The individual may also choose to seek additional information that could help resolve the problem. In this information search stage, the individual will utilize various sources to gather information about the problem and possible solutions. The outcome of the information search could lead to a decision to cope with the problem or to take action to resolve the problem. Coping might be considered when the magnitude of the problem is greater than the resources available to solve it. The individual may however, after searching for information alternatives, choose to take action to resolve the problem. The

final step in the problem solving approach is an evaluation of the solution or action taken to resolve the problem.

The theory of problem solving behavior (Tallman et al., 1993) mirrors Roger's (1995) innovation decision process in Figure 1. In the innovation design process an individual passes from knowledge of an innovation, to persuasion, to a decision to adopt or reject the innovation, to implementation, and finally to confirmation. In both models, awareness and knowledge are at the beginning of the processes. An individual/innovator acknowledges there is a problem and becomes aware of an innovation that may resolve the problem. The next step in problem solving behavior is the information search where the individual wants to determine what alternatives are available to solve the problem. Likewise in the innovation process, the innovator obtains information to decrease uncertainty about the innovation.

Figure 2. Theory of Problem Solving Behavior



At the persuasion stage and especially at the decision stage, the innovator seeks innovation-evaluation information in order to reduce uncertainty about the innovation's expected consequences. Here the individual wants to know the innovation's advantages and disadvantages in his/her own situation. Interpersonal networks with peers are particularly likely to convey such evaluative information about an innovation. The next step in the model of problem solving is to take action or implement the innovation in the innovation decision model. Finally, in both models there is a need to get feedback and re-evaluate the decision to determine if the solution or innovation that was implemented was effective. Subjective evaluations of a new idea from other individuals are especially likely to influence the innovator at the confirmation stage. The innovator seeks reinforcement of the decision that has already been made, but may reverse the previous decision if he/she receives conflicting messages about the innovation.

Social Support and HRMI

Barnard (1938) described the organization as a system of cooperative efforts. Individuals must work together to accomplish the goals of the organization. People are generally social individuals; they live and work with others and their lives are interdependent upon each other. Understanding the effects of social relationships bring us closer to determining the psychological and behavior processes that are necessary to be productive at work. Rogers (1962) used the term social system to describe a population of individuals who are functionally differentiated and engaged in collective problem-solving behavior. The members of a social system are individuals, although these individuals represent informal groups, industrial firms, or schools. The social system

may consist of all the farmers in one county, the physicians in a community, or the members of an aborigine tribe. All of the members cooperate at least to the extent of having some common problem, which they are seeking to solve. The social system in this study is the organization and the solution to the common problem could be the adoption of an HRMI.

The provision of social support is a means by which interpersonal communication occurs among employees within the organization. All communication about the innovation facilitates the process and leads to the adoption or rejection of the HRMI. Aiken and Hage (1971) concluded that an organic organization with an effective communication channel is vital for successful innovation. They suggested the implementation of mechanisms that would encourage formal and informal communication throughout all levels of the organization. House (1991) also argued that an organic organization has more innovations because the weak structure in the organization would allow for the manifestation of individual behavior. Rogers (1995) proposed that although mass media is the fastest way to communicate a new idea to potential adopters, interpersonal channels are more effective in persuading an individual to accept the new idea.

Innovation research has attempted to distinguish differences among organizations and organizational members by classifying employees in categories, such as persons who adopt innovations first and those who adopt later. Innovativeness is the degree to which an adopter is early in implementing an innovation as compared to others (Rogers, 1995). Rogers identified five adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Innovators are proactive in seeking information and are therefore,

the first to know about new ideas and consequently the first to adopt an innovation. They become aware of new ideas through mass media or through their large social networks that extend beyond their own organizational boundaries. Innovators are less risk adverse than other adopters and are more likely to explore areas where others have not ventured. They are confident in their abilities and proud of their reputation of being the first to introduce new ideas to others in the organization.

Kirton (1976) utilized a different classification to describe the cognitive style of adopters of innovations based on the amount of structure needed to solve a problem. He argued that everyone can be located on a continuum ranging from an ability to do things better to the ability to do things differently, called adaptive and innovative, respectively. This classification is based on adaptation-innovation as a basic dimension of personality relevant to the analysis of organizational change. Kirton (1976, 1987) believed that there are personality differences between innovators and adaptors. He developed the Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory or KAI to evaluate whether an individual is an innovator or an adaptor.

Kirton (1980) suggested that both innovators and adaptors are needed for organizational effectiveness. Adaptors are characterized by precision, reliability, efficiency, and methodicalness. Innovators, on the other hand, are seen as undisciplined, thinking tangentially, and approaching tasks from unexpected angles. Innovators bring needed change to the organization while adaptors provide the stability needed.

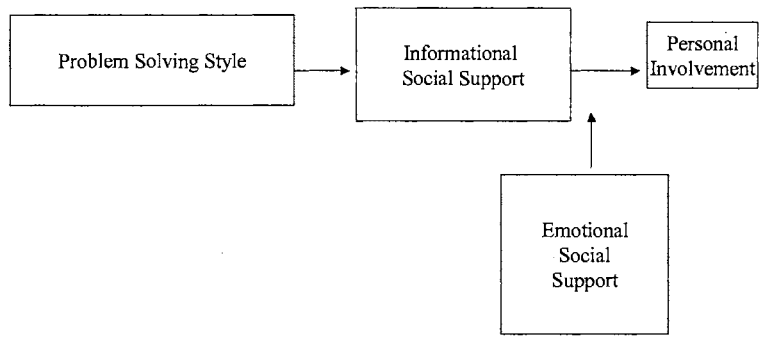
In summary, both Kirton's (1976) and Roger's (1995) classifications view the innovator as the person who is more likely to pursue organizational change. The innovator is a high achiever, more likely to bring new ideas to the organization and

tolerant of risk. The adaptor, on the other hand, is more of a conformist, satisfied with the status quo.

Some forms of social support may be more important than others in the innovation process. According to the theory of problem solving behavior, the extent of the information search depends upon the perceived difficulty of the problem (Tallman et. al, 1993). As the problem becomes more complex, there is a need for more information, and likewise more informational support. In addition, as shown in Figure 3, the problem solving style of the decision-maker may affect the information one receives. Adaptors are concerned with the more traditional problems of the organization while innovators are known for looking outside the current paradigm (Kirton, 1994).

Keller and Holland (1978) conduced a study of research and development departments and found that adaptors were knowledgeable of internal company policies and procedures, while innovators were more familiar with the latest technology, especially from outside the company. Adaptors make decisions that are less risky and more a part of the status quo, therefore, decisions are being made using heuristics and other established mental maps. The innovator, on the other hand, makes decisions about new ideas that may challenge the accepted way of doing things in the organization. The innovator will want information such as how the innovation works, who else has implemented it and with what results, as well as the impact the innovation may have in this situation. Their decisions bring about more radical change in the organization and involve more risk.

Figure 3. Social Support and HRMI: A Problem Solving Approach



Employees may also receive social support outside of the organization. For example, an employee needing assistance may seek information, as well as emotional support, from external colleagues who are knowledgeable about the innovation. Sometimes the person who has experienced the same problem is not going to be a coworker from the same organization. Instead the innovator may have to go outside the organization and utilize their personal network of colleagues to get information and reduce uncertainty about the innovation. In addition, internal colleagues view the innovator as a maverick and are unwilling to provide support for his/her ideas (Rogers, 1995).

Dougherty and Hardy (1996) found that individuals lacking organizational support, utilized their own networks to spread information about innovations. Abrahamson and Rosenkopf (1997) conducted computer simulations to show the effect of social networks in the innovation process. They concluded that the innovator received information about innovations through his/her network and this information influenced whether an innovation was adopted. These studies suggest,

Hypothesis 1a: The innovator problem solving style is positively related to informational support received from outside the organization.

Hypothesis 1b: The innovator problem solving style is negatively related to informational support received from within the organization.

Because an innovation is something new for the organization, it is inherently associated with some risk. Albrecht and Hall (1991) argued that new ideas are risky because they are a change to the status quo and because they allow other organization members an opportunity to evaluate the merits of the idea. No one can be certain of the outcome when implementing something new, even if the current situation has problems. There is also no guarantee that the new idea will improve the current situation. Consequently, not all innovations will be implemented and some of those that are implemented will not be beneficial to the organization (Abrahamson, 1991; O'Neil, Pouder and Buchholtz, 1998).

Factors used to evaluate the degree of risk associated with HRMIs are pervasiveness, magnitude, and radicalness (Wolfe, 1995). These factors contribute to the uncertainty of the knowledge concerning the link between the innovation's inputs, processes and outcomes. Pervasiveness is the extent to which the innovation is perceived as a threat or the proportion of employee behaviors that are affected by the innovation. Magnitude is the degree of displacement of existing structure, personnel, and financial resources from the innovation. Radicalness is the extent to which an innovation is novel or represents change. It influences both uncertainty and resistance. Innovations that are high in pervasiveness, magnitude, and radicalness will create greater friction in the

organization. Such changes will require greater support in order to be accepted and adopted by the organization.

Information about an innovation decreases its risk by reducing uncertainty about changes in the organization. As the innovator receives information from sources where the innovation has been adopted, he/she becomes more confident about implementation in his/her own organization. This confidence may even lead to the innovator becoming a champion for implementing the innovation. This means he/she is willing to recommend the adoption of the innovation as well as defend any opposition to its implementation. . Ideas that are adopted almost always have an individual who champions the idea and supports its implementation.

Wolfe (1995) discussed the role of an innovation champion who advocates and promotes human resource management innovations. The innovation champion counters inherent resistance to change found in the organization and pushes the innovation. Meyer and Goes (1988) concluded from their interviews of hospital administrators, physicians, board members, and nurses that CEOs provide considerable influence by championing the assimilation of innovations. Howell and Higgins (1990) developed a model that included the personality characteristics of champions. They argued that innovation champions are risk takers, have a high need for achievement, are persuasive, persistent, and innovative. They used information-technology innovations to support their hypothesis that innovation champions were willing to take more risk and were more innovative than non-champions. Information is important to the decision to champion an innovation.

Hypothesis 2: Informational support is positively related to personal involvement in the adoption of the innovation.

During the decision-making stage of the innovation process, the innovator must decide, based in large part on the information search, whether to accept or reject the innovation. It is psychologically difficult to separate the message from the messenger. When the idea is being considered, the messenger bringing the idea is also evaluated. At this time, innovator will be selective in determining whom to turn to for emotional support. The person(s) chosen will have to be someone the innovator feels comfortable talking to as well as someone he/she can trust. Albrecht and Hall (1991) conducted two studies on the role of interpersonal communication and personal relationships on organizational innovation. They found that people discussed new ideas with others they perceived as being trustworthy and supportive. In addition, relationships that went beyond work and included some type of social or personal attachment yielded more discussion of innovations.

Additional support for the positive benefits of emotional support can be found in studies of both children and adults. When middle and high school children received emotional support from parents and teachers, they were more satisfied with school and spent more time studying (Richman, Rosenfeld, and Bowen, 1998). Likewise, Ford (1985) investigated the effects of emotional support in interpersonal relationships for work outcomes and found that emotional support was more important than other types of social support for positive work outcomes and for satisfaction with coworkers. These studies suggest the importance of emotional support for a sense of satisfaction. When a person is making an important decision with unpredictable outcomes, such as the

adoption of a new idea, he/she will look to others for support. If that support is in favor of the decision, he/she is more likely to adopt the idea. Consequently,

> *Hypothesis 3: Emotional support moderates the relationship between informational support and personal involvement in the innovation, such that when emotional support is low, increased information is positively related to more personal involvement in the innovation.*

Finally, although this research focused on the importance of the individual and interpersonal relations for the adoption of HRMI innovations, the organizational context is also critical to HRMI survival. The context can be intra-organizational, such as strength of culture, size, unionization, etc. or extra-organizational, such as competition, government regulation, etc. Dougherty and Hardy (1996) focused on product innovation and found that innovation was limited because it was dependent on the position of individuals rather than the organizational system. They concluded that the configuration of power within the organization should be shifted from select individuals to the entire organization if they are to sustain innovation over a long period of time. Dougherty and Hardy (1996) argued that power that is personal or held by an individual is deemed insufficient for long-term innovation. They suggested that organizational power that focuses on processes instead of the control of resources is needed.

A more integrative approach to understanding the importance of both individuals and organizational context for HRMI is illustrated by other researchers (Meyer and Goes, 1988; Wolfe, 1995). For example, Meyer and Goes (1988) conducted research using a hospital setting to propose a model of innovation with three determinants: contextual attributes, innovation attributes, and attributes from the interaction of contexts and

innovations. Contextual attributes were defined as characteristics of environments, organizations, and leaders. Attributes of innovations were based on technological aspects, such as skills needed to use the innovation, the amount of risk to use the innovation, and the visibility of the innovation to others.

Wolfe (1995) also argued that there are three HR innovation determinants: innovation champion, champion power and organizational context. He found that champion power and organizational context interact in HRMI implementation such that one can compensate for the other. Both studies indicate the importance of organizational context while acknowledging also individual behavior as determinant factors for the adoption of HR innovations. In fact, Yoon and Lim (1999) found that employees with greater social support also received more organizational support because support from colleagues validated the support decision of the organization.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a problem solving approach and examines the effect of informational and emotional social support on the human resource management innovation process. Two problem solving styles are identified as adaptors and innovators. Innovators are hypothesized to receive informational support from outside the organization. The model also specifies a positive relationship between the informational support received and personal involvement in the innovation. Finally, the model suggests that emotional social support moderates the relationship between informational social support and personal involvement in the innovation. This chapter describes the design of the study, sample, data collection procedures, the instruments, and the analysis performed to evaluate these hypotheses from Chapter II.

Sample and Data Collection

The sample consists of professional members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) as this study investigates human resource management innovations. SHRM is the leading voice of the human resource management profession and the world's largest human resource management association. Founded in 1948 to represent the personnel profession, SHRM provides education, information services, conferences, publications, and other services to its members. There are more than 165,000 professional and student members of SHRM subdivided into six areas. Each area has student and professional chapters whose purpose includes providing a local

forum for the personal and professional development of its members and increasing group decision-making skills. Each area also has an Area Director as well as an Area Board comprised of a State Council Director from each state and other elected and appointed positions.

TABLE 1

AREA IV SHRM MEMBERSHIP

State	# Chapters	# of SHRM Members	# Chapters Contacted	Estimated # Members Contacted*
Arkansas	7	523	5	343
Kansas	7	621	4	245
Louisiana	10	828	9	703
Mississippi	8	310	8	310
Missouri	8	929	7	832
Nebraska	4	616	4	616
Oklahoma	8	695	5	363
Texas	33	4,650	19	2,519
TOTAL	85	9,172	63	5,921

*Numbers indicate estimation based on SHRM membership for contacted chapters and total SHRM membership for the state.

The sample was drawn from SHRM members in Area IV, which includes the states of Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. Of the more than 500 affiliated SHRM chapters, there are a total of 85 professional chapters and 9,172 SHRM members in Area IV (See Table 1). The Area IV Director sent an email to chapter presidents informing them of this study and requesting their participation. Using the SHRM website, which lists the president's name for each

chapter, the author contacted 63 chapters (74%) in Area IV by telephone and/or email and requested their participation in the research. The remaining chapters were not contacted either because the telephone numbers were inaccurate or because telephone messages were exchanged and contact never made.

A cover letter, briefly explaining the purpose of the research, and a questionnaire (Appendix A) were mailed or emailed to the president of each chapter contacted. (Due to privacy concerns and in some cases no solicitation policies, chapter presidents would not provide the author with the email or home address or any other personal information about their members.) The contacted chapter presidents agreed to distribute the questionnaire via email, newsletter, or during their chapter meetings, however there was no way to verify that questionnaires were actually distributed. Those who received the questionnaire could respond by mail, fax, or email to the author. In addition, many respondents could also complete and submit the questionnaire online.

A follow up letter and another copy of the questionnaire were sent to chapter presidents approximately two weeks later. Kerlinger (1986) found the expected response rate for a survey is less than 40-50%, so an incentive was offered to those who returned the questionnaire. Respondents were given the option of including their name and a contact number to participate in a drawing for a $100 gift certificate from Amazon.com.

Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1995) suggested a minimum sample size of 10-20 observations for each variable when conducting factor analysis. In addition, to achieve a power of .80 in multiple regression, they also recommended a sample size of 100 when there are two independent variables at the .05 significance level to detect an R Square of 10 percent or greater.

A total of 182 responses were received from all sources (internet, email, and fax), however, only 130 responded appropriately for inclusion in this study. (Respondents had to indicate the existence of a problem that required a change in the current way of doing things.) Including only chapters with at least one questionnaire returned, the response rate was calculated at 3%. Since there was no way to verify if questionnaires were actually distributed to the chapters, the author assumed that SHRM chapters, where no questionnaires were received, did not distribute the questionnaire. There was also no way to determine if those who responded differed from those who did not.

A preliminary analysis of the data was conducted to detect potential problems such as outliers and missing data. Mean replacement was used to replace missing data in cases where only one item from a scale was missing. Responses that had an entire section of the survey missing were completely deleted from the study. This reduced the sample size for the study to 126 questionnaires.

Design

The design of this study was cross-sectional field research using a self-administered questionnaire. All data is requested from the subject or self-report data, which can increase the potential for problems associated with common method variance. This means the relationship between the independent and dependent variables could be attributable to the common variance that exist due to collecting the data from the same source and using the same method. It would have been difficult and impractical to collect this data using another unobtrusive method. Doty and Glick (1998) conducted a meta-

analysis and concluded that although common method bias is a cause for concern, it did not invalidate many research findings.

Further evidence for the minimal effect of common method variance from the use of self-report methods can be found in a meta-analysis conducted by Crampton and Wagner (1994). They suggested that condemnation of all research using self-report methods was unfounded and that although these methods are susceptible to producing percept-percept inflation, it is only in certain domain-specific areas of microorganizational research. For example, research on job satisfaction, turnover, performance appraisal, and role characteristics had high effect-size influences; while research on job involvement, career advancement, goal setting, and organizational culture had virtually no effect-size influences. Using these two extremes, they concluded that nearly half of the different areas of research would be located in the middle with neither dominant nor absent levels of percept-percept inflation from the use of self report methods.

Instrument

The HRM Work Questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed for this study. The questionnaire has the following five sections:

1. Section I – HRMI
2. Section II – Social Support Within The Company
3. Section III – Social Support Outside The Company
4. Section IV – Problem Solving Style
5. Section V – Demographics

The HRMI section asks six questions on the nature of HRM problems in the past year and consequently if there was an innovation investigated and implemented to resolve the problem. Before Section II begins, there is a statement that directs respondents to continue to think about the HRM innovations as they answer questions in the next section. There are eighteen questions in Section II about relationships with colleagues within the company. This section includes items that measure emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support; however only emotional and informational support are relevant for this study. Section III follows with ten questions about relationships with business associates outside the company.

Section IV of the HRM Work Questionnaire contains thirteen questions on behaviors at work that indicate problem solving style. Demographics are requested in Section V and include data such as gender, age, education, race, and length of time in the position. The end of the questionnaire offers respondents an opportunity to participate in a drawing for a gift certificate by including their name and a contact number.

Measures

Problem Solving Style

The modified Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory or KAI (Kirton, 1976, 1987) was used to determine a respondent's problem solving style. The KAI is a measure of the characteristic approach a person has towards problem solving and decision-making. The Adaption-Innovation theory underlying the KAI posits that a person can be located on a single dimension of cognitive style, with the end points labeled as Adaptors and

Innovators. The original KAI consisted of 32 items and produced a score that distinguishes adaptors from innovators on a continuum. Each item was scored on a scale from 1 (very difficult) to 5 (very easy) with a range from 32 to 160 and a theoretical mean of 96. Persons with scores on the lower end are considered adaptors while persons with scores on the higher end indicate innovators.

The KAI is purported to measure an individual's propensity to innovate. It represents the individual's style or how he/she generates solutions (Mudd, 1996). Previous research has found the KAI to be a valid measure of the adaptation-innovation dimension of managerial decision style (Bobic, Davis, and Cunningham, 1999). The KAI was designed for use with working adults with some life experiences, although it has been used in studies utilizing undergraduate and graduate students (Kirton, 1994). In previous studies using manager samples, the internal reliability (Cronbach alpha) of the KAI has ranged from .89 (De Ciantis, 1987) to .91 (McCarthy, 1993).

Although the KAI was originally developed with 32 items and considered uni-dimensional (Kirton, 1977), some researchers have challenged that assumption (Taylor, 1989). Taylor (1989) modified the KAI and reduced it to a 13-item inventory with three sub-scales that were found to be orthogonal. This study utilized the 13-item KAI, however responses were collapsed into one dimension because the variable of interest was problem solving style, rather than the dimensions. Respondents were asked to describe how difficult (1 = very difficult) or easy (5 = very easy) it is to do and maintain each behavior at work (Appendix B).

Social Support

House and Kahn (1985) recommended the following for selecting a social support measure:

- Choose measure to answer specific questions of study
- Use existing models verbatim or adapt for specific purpose
- Clearly conceptualize question about support process
- Measure at least two aspects of social relationships

Social support was measured by an index adapted from previous research (i.e., House, 1981; Dormann and Zapf, 1999). The items were slightly rephrased to become more specific to this sample of human resource management professionals (Appendix C). The four components of social support: emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal were measured on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Only responses for emotional and informational support pertain to this study. The same questions were asked of the respondent about both internal colleagues and external business associates.

Personal Involvement in the Innovation

Personal involvement in the innovation was assessed by asking respondents a series of questions about a problem that may have resulted in the adoption of an innovation as the solution. First, the respondents were given the definition of HRMI as defined in this research. Then they were asked whether there was a HRM problem that required a change in the way things were currently done. If the answer was yes, the

respondents were then asked two additional questions. The first question was "To what extent did you personally investigate the use of a new product..." and the second question was "To what extent did you personally take action to insure the adoption of the new product ..." (Appendix A, Section I). Both questions used a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all and 5 is to a great extent. The two additional questions were correlated at .624 (Pearson Correlation), which was significant at the .01 level, indicating appropriateness to total the responses from these questions. The sum of these two questions was used as a measure of personal involvement in the innovation.

TABLE 2

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Age
Gender
Education
Race
SHRM Membership
Time in Current Position
Time in HR Profession

Demographic Variables

Table 2 shows the demographic variables that were collected in the study. Included were age, gender, education, time in position, and the time in the professional. Correlations of these variables were examined to evaluate them as potential omitted variables from the study. Appendix A indicates ranges used to measure each variable. Some social support research has shown gender differences in the receipt of social support. Women may receive more support because it is socially acceptable to do so.

Men, on the other hand, may be viewed as weak if they accept help from others. Assistance could be withheld for the same reason; to offer help to a man may be viewed as an insult to his manhood.

Additionally, the length of time in a position and/or profession may also have an effect on the receipt of social support. Feedback, a form of appraisal social support, was sought on important issues and in new situations less often by individuals with long organizational tenure (Ashford, 1986). Employees with less time in the position or profession may have less confidence about their abilities, especially in uncertain situations. Age may also affect the receipt of social support. Martire, Schulz, Mittelmark, and Newson (1999) examined the degree of social support for older adults and concluded that less social support is required for older individuals because they have fewer unresolved problems than younger individuals.

Hypotheses and Analysis of Data

Correlations were examined for collinearity among the independent variables and to assess their predictive power. Factor analysis was used to determine if all items measuring the variables (i.e., adaptor/innovator and social support) were correlated into the specified dimensions as posited by previous research.

All hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. Table 3 shows the independent and dependent variables for all hypotheses. Hypothesis 1a posits that the innovator problem solving style will be positively related to informational support from external colleagues while hypothesis 1b states that the innovator problem solving style

will be negatively related to informational support from internal colleagues. The following equations were tested:

Hypothesis 1a: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + e$

where Y = external informational support and X1 = problem solving style.

Hypothesis 1b: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + e$

where Y = internal informational support and X1 = problem solving style.

A composite score for informational support from internal colleagues was determined by totaling responses from items 5, 8, 10, 11, and 15 (Appendix A, Section II). A composite score for informational support from external colleagues was determined by totaling responses from items 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 (Appendix A, Section III).

TABLE 3

INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

	IV	DV
Hypothesis 1a	Innovator Style	External Information Support
Hypothesis 1b	Innovator Style	Internal Information Support
Hypothesis 2	Information Support	Personal Involvement
Hypothesis 3	Information Support MOD=Emotional Support	Personal Involvement

IV= Independent Variable, DV=Dependent Variable, MOD=Moderator

Hypothesis 2 posits a direct relationship between information support and personal involvement in the innovation. The equation used to test this relationship was

$$Y = b0 + b1X1 + e$$

where Y = personal involvement in the innovation and X1 = informational support.

Hypotheses 3 states that emotional support (from internal colleagues) has a moderating effect on the relationship between information support and personal involvement in the innovation. A composite score for emotional support from internal colleagues was determined by totaling responses from items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 14 (Section II of the questionnaire). For hypothesis 3, the following equations were evaluated where Y = personal involvement in the adoption, X1 = information support, X2 = emotional support, and X1X2 = the cross product of information support and emotional support:

Equation 1: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + e$ Main Effect

Equation 2: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X1X2 + e$ Full Model

The first equation tests the main effect of information support and emotional support on personal involvement in the innovation. The second equation tests the interactive effects of information support and emotional support on personal involvement in the innovation.

Finally, the full model (Figure 3) indicates a moderated mediation relationship among all the variables. Informational social support mediates the relationship between problem solving style and personal involvement in the innovation. This relationship is then moderated by emotional social support. To test the moderated mediation model, the following equations were analyzed where Y = personal involvement in the adoption, X1 = problem solving style, X2 = information support (Mediator), X3 = emotional support (Moderator), and X2X3 = the cross product of information support and emotional support (Mediator x Moderator):

Equation 1: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + e$

Equation 2: $Y = b0 + b1X2 + b2X3 + b3X2X3 + e$

Equation 3: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X3 + b4X2X3 + e$

A moderated mediation model, if supported, explains how, as well as when, problem solving style is related to personal involvement in the innovation.

Summary

This chapter detailed the research methods that were employed to test the hypotheses in the research model. Questionnaires were sent to members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) via chapter presidents that were contacted by phone or email. The response rate was low, however sufficient questionnaires were received to conduct the analysis. The next chapter gives the results of the data analysis outlined in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results obtained from the methodology outlined in Chapter III. These results were obtained using the design, sample, data collection procedures, measures, and data analysis methods described in Chapter III. This chapter presents this information in three sections. First, descriptive statistics of the sample are given. Second, factor analysis results are evaluated and reliability analyses for the scales are given. Finally, results of regression analysis for each hypothesis are presented.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of 98 females and 28 males with 30% age 30-39 years old, 29% age 40-49 years old, and 26% age 50-59 years old. Forty five percent had a bachelor's degree and twenty nine percent also had a master's degree. Eighty three percent of the respondents specified their race as White/Caucasian and 79% indicated they were married.

Representative position/job titles included Operations Director, HR Manager, HR Director, and Generalist. Most respondents had been in their current position less than 5 years (67%) and another 23% had been in their position less than 10 years. There was a fairly even distribution of time in the human resource management profession: 19% had less than 5 years; 28% had 5 to less than 10 years; 23% had 10 to less than 15 years; 14% had 15 to less than 20 years; and 16% had more than 20 years.

TABLE 4

HRM INNOVATIONS AND PROBLEMS

HRM FUNCTION	INNOVATIONS	SAMPLE PROBLEMS
Recruitment & Selection	40	Mechanizing application process, Job posting, Employment laws
Training & Development	30	New employee orientation, 401k plans, Computer skills
Rewards & Benefits	32	Open enrollment, Vision plan, Cost containment for salary
Communication	30	Bilingual personnel, Email
Performance Appraisal	24	No formal evaluation system, Updates to PA
Organizational Design	16	Downsizing, Reorganization Reassignments, Merger
Other	30	Unionization, Tuition reimbursement Inconsistent corrective action

Problems that required an innovation were found in all areas of human resource management as shown in Table 4. Most of the problems impacted multiple areas. The area of recruitment and selection was affected by 40 of the HRM innovations. This category included mechanizing the application process, job posting, and complying with employment laws and requirements. Training and development, as well as the communication function of HR, were both affected by 30 of the innovations. Training

and development included problems with new employee orientation, 401k plans, and computer skills. Communication problems included bilingual personnel and email.

The rewards and benefits function had 32 problems requiring an innovation. Problems in rewards and benefits included open enrollment, vision plan, and cost containment for salary and benefits. There were 24 performance appraisal problems mainly focused on the lack of a performance evaluation system or the need to update the current one. There were only 16 organizational design problems and they primarily addressed changes in the organization due to budget cuts (i.e., downsizing, reorganization, etc.). Other problems not specified in one of the human resource management functions included unionization, tuition reimbursement, and inconsistent corrective action by supervisors.

Table 5 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients and descriptive statistics for the variables in this study. Problem solving style was correlated with both internal informational support and external informational support, as well as with emotional support. Internal informational support was also intercorrelated with both emotional support and external informational support.

Of the demographic variables, only time in the profession had a significant correlation ($p < .05$) with personal involvement in the innovation. Additionally, both education and age were negatively correlated with emotional support. This result indicates older employees, as well as those with more education, receive less emotional support. Younger employees are usually new to a job and/or professional, many are probably working in their first full-time career position. These new employees are going to have less self-confidence and know-how than older employees, thereby requiring more

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Problem Solving	49.200	5.99												
2. Internal Infor	17.900	3.960	.297**											
3. External Infor	18.400	3.540	.214*	.311**										
4. Emotional Support	18.900	4.000	.364**	.721**	.228**									
5. Personal Involve	8.600	1.940	.026	-.026	.105	.052								
6. Gender	1.778	.417	.130	.026	.087	.130	-.109							
7. Age	2.776	1.069	-.101	-.121	-.015	-.249**	-.052	-.221*						
8. Education	3.167	.846	-.115	-.088	-.031	-.217*	-.117	-.257**	.299**					
9. Race	2.146	.674	-.071	.054	.000	.028	.110	-.177	.108	.061				
10.Martial Status	1.872	.457	-.020	-.015	-.037	.022	.101	-.019	.270**	-.152	.009			
11.Time Position	1.421	.941	.066	-.028	.070	-.042	.021	-.310**	.390**	.112	.162	.104		
12.Time Profession	2.876	1.563	-.142	-.012	.110	-.070	.187*	-.210*	.483**	.147	.176	.183*	.189*	
13.SHRM Member	.870	.338	.016	-.081	.087	-.108	-.062	.028	.096	.053	-.099	-.111	.061	.173

n = 126
*p<= .05, **p<= .01

emotional support than older more seasoned employees. Similar reasoning may also apply to employees with less education. Less education could also mean less knowledge and therefore less confidence, requiring the support and assistance of others in the organization.

Reliability

The scales for personal involvement in the innovation were designed specifically for this study. The scales measuring problem solving styles, informational and emotional social support were readily available and adopted for this study. Coefficient alpha was used to determine the internal consistency reliability of the scales. Table 5 shows the standardized reliability coefficient or alpha for each measure. Coefficient alpha is the mean of all split-half reliabilities (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's alpha evaluates differences in the item standard deviations and can be smaller than standardized item alpha if differences are found (Cortina, 1993). Standardized alpha, utilized in this study, is appropriate when item standard scores are summed to form scale scores (Cortina, 1993).

Reliability for problem solving styles, measured by the KAI, was .80. The reliability coefficient for internal and external informational social support was .85 and .84, respectively. For internal emotional social support, the reliability coefficient was .88. Personal involvement in the innovation had a reliability coefficient of .77. An alpha of .70 or above is usually considered an acceptable standard, and in this case .77 is considered especially good because there were only two items for this measure. Cortina (1993) demonstrated that alpha is a function of the number of items in a scale. The larger

TABLE 6

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS

Variable	Reliability Coefficient*
Problem Solving Style	.80
Internal Informational Social Support	.85
External Informational Social Support	.84
Internal Emotional Social Support	.88
Personal Involvement in the Innovation	.77

* All results utilized standardized alpha

the number of intercorrelated items, the more improved (larger) the alpha. However when comparing two alphas close in range, the one with the smaller number of items also has the greater average inter-item correlation.

Factor Analysis

Responses for items measuring problem solving style, informational social support and emotional social support were analyzed to determine the underlying factors. The data were analyzed in SPSS using principal component analysis available in the program. Common factor analysis differs from principal component analysis in some respects, however, the results from both analyses lead to similar conclusions regarding the number of factors (Hair et al, 1995; Hatcher, 1994).

The modified KAI was used to measure problem solving style in this research. Although this study utilized the KAI as a unidimensional measure, some previous

research found the modified KAI had three sub-scales that were orthogonal. Factor analysis was therefore conducted to determine if the factors were independent and uncorrelated with each other. The results from principal component analysis using the Varimax rotation method are shown in Table 7. Three components were extracted that

TABLE 7

RESULTS FROM KAI FACTOR ANALYSIS

	COMPONENTS		
	1	2	3
S4Q1Conform	7.625E-02	.168	.764
S4Q2Thorough	.229	.747	7.303E-02
S4Q3Stimulating	.574	2.222E-02	.228
S4Q4Prudent w Authority	.434	.174	.368
S4Q5Detailed Work	-1.538E-02	.826	5.422E-02
S4Q6Original Ideas	.791	.108	-.227
S4Q7Master Details	.282	.770	.153
S4Q8Proliferate Ideas	.775	.171	-3.231E-02
S4Q9Methodical	-.106	.682	.376
S4Q10Fresh Perspective	.766	1.194E-02	4.180E-02
S4Q11Fit Into System	.171	4.283E-02	.839
S4Q12Cope With Ideas	.704	4.750E-03	.230
S4Q13Proper Authority	-6.484E-02	.386	.537

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

explained more than 58% of the variance. An examination of the correlation matrix revealed several items had negative correlations, particularly for "Original Ideas." In addition, there were a limited number or items with intercorrelations greater than .500. These results provide some support for three dimensions of the modified KAI.

TABLE 8

RESULTS FROM SOCIAL SUPPORT
FACTOR ANALYSIS

	Components	
	1	2
S2Q1Emotional SS1	.775	.474
S2Q2Emotional SS2	.777	.598
S2Q4Emotional SS3	.658	.726
S2Q5Informational SS1	.537	.881
S2Q8Informational SS2	.701	.519
S2Q7Emotional SS4	.902	.629
S2Q10Informational SS3	.562	.887
S2Q11Informational SS4	.513	.848
S2Q14Emotional SS5	.879	.445
S2Q15Informational SS5	.622	.583

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Principal component analysis was also conducted for items measuring informational social support and emotional social support. An oblique rotation method (Promax) was used because the theoretical underlying factors are not assumed to be uncorrelated with each other (Hair et al, 1995). Two components were found as indicated

in Table 8. Component 1 included four items developed to measure emotional support and two items for informational support. Component 2, on the other hand, included one item developed to measure emotional support and three items developed for informational support.

The two informational items included in Component 1 for emotional support were "My colleagues have introduced me to people ..." and "My colleagues provide me referrals for getting assistance with my work" An examination of the correlation matrix for these items indicate relatively low to medium correlations with other emotional support items in Component 1 ranging from .282 to .596 (See Table 5). In Component 2 for informational support, the emotional support item included had medium to high intercorrelations ranging from .451 to .672. This item was "I respect the opinion of my colleagues." Overall the analysis indicated these items were appropriate to measure the emotional and informational support dimensions of social support.

Regression Analysis

Assumptions of linearity, heteroscedasticity (unequal variance), independence, and normality were diagnosed using partial regression plots, residual plots, and normal probability plots. An examination of the normal probability plot for the dependent variable, personal involvement in the innovation, revealed the distribution was skewed to the right (Figure 4). Hair et al. (1995) recommends data transformations as the remedy for nonnormality, however the commonly used data transformations for positively skewed distributions (i.e., taking logarithms of the variable) were not effective.

Figure 4

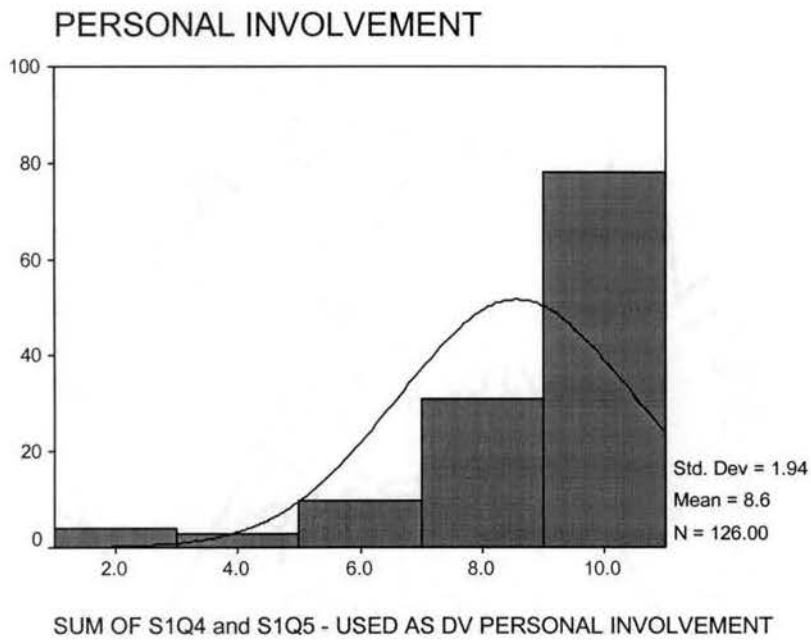
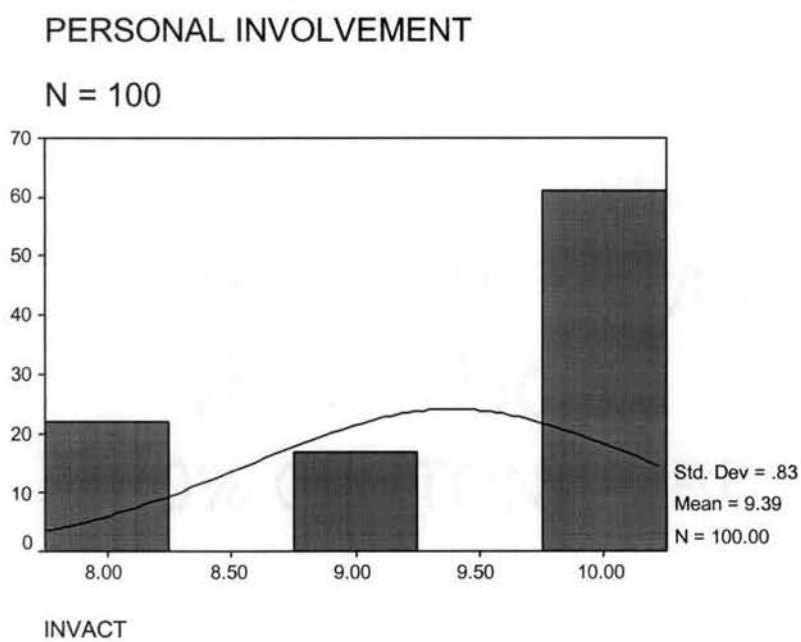


Figure 5



Data from the left tail of the distribution were deleted by using the mean as the lower end of the data. This process, called trimming is used to entirely remove the most extreme scores (Shorack, 1986). Trimming is similar to winsorizing, which changes the most extreme scores to the next less extreme scores. Both processes can be used to alter the mean or arithmetic average when outliers or extreme scores negatively impact normalcy of the data (Shorack and Wellner, 1986). As shown in Figure 5, trimming corrected the problem with normalcy and only reduced the sample size by twenty-six to yield one hundred, the minimum number of questionnaires needed for the analysis.

Regression analysis was used to determine the results from hypotheses 1a and 1b (Table 9). Hypothesis 1a, which posited that innovators receive informational support from external colleagues, was supported. In this analysis, the dependent variable, external informational support, is regressed on the independent variable, problem-solving style as shown in the following equation:

$$y = b0 + b1x + e$$

where y = external informational support and x = problem solving style. As discussed in Chapter III, problem-solving style is measured on a continuum where persons with scores on the lower end are classified adaptors and those with scores on the higher end are considered innovators. The relationship between problem solving style (innovators) and external information support is positive and significant ($p < .05$), supporting hypothesis 1a.

Hypothesis 1b posits that the innovator problem solving style is negatively related to informational support from internal colleagues. The dependent variable, internal

TABLE 9

RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS: HYPOTHESES 1a AND 1b

	Dependent Variables	
	ExInfo	InInfo
Regression Coefficients for Independent Variable		
Problem Solving Style	.161*	.148*
R square	.065	.045
Adj. R square	.055	.036
F value	6.760*	4.646*

*p <. 05

information support is regressed on problem solving style, the independent variable as shown in the following equation:

$$y = b0 + b1x + e$$

Where y = internal informational support and x = problem solving style. As in hypothesis 1a, problem- solving style is measured on a continuum where persons with scores on the lower end are classified adaptors and those with scores on the higher end are considered innovators. The relationship between problem solving style (innovators) and internal information support was also significant ($p < .05$), but the relationship was positive while the hypothesized relationship was a negative one. Hypothesis 1b is therefore not supported. Hypotheses 1a and 1b indicate that innovators, contrary to hypothesis 1b, receive both internal and external information support.

TABLE 10

RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS: HYPOTHESIS 2

Regression Coefficient for Independent Variable	Dependent Variable Personal Involvement
Informational Social Support	.087
R square	.008
Adj. R square	-.003
F value	.741

*p <. 05

Hypothesis 2 posits that informational support is positively associated with personal involvement in the innovation. The regression equation is shown as follows:

$$y = b0 + b1x + e$$

where y = personal involvement in the innovation and x = informational social support. Table 10 shows the results of the regression analysis. The relationship between informational social support and personal involvement in the innovation was not significant ($p < .05$), therefore Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypotheses 3 postulated that emotional support has a moderating effect on the relationship between information support and personal involvement in the innovation. For hypothesis 3, the following equations were evaluated where Y = personal

involvement in the adoption, X1 = information support, X2 = emotional support, and X1X2 = the cross product of information support and emotional support:

Equation 1: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + e$ Main Effect

Equation 2: $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X1X2 + e$ Full Model

As shown in Table 11, the main effect of informational support and emotional support on personal involvement in the innovation was significant ($t = 2.166$, $p < .05$). The interactive effect of information support and emotional support on personal involvement in the innovation was also significant ($t = -1.792$, $p < .10$). In addition, the change in R Square was significant ($F = 2.484$, $p < .10$), supporting hypothesis 3.

TABLE 11

RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS: HYPOTHESIS 3

Equations	Regression Coefficient	T Value	Chg R Sq
1) $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + e$	.824	2.166*	.008
2) $Y = b0 + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X1X2 + e$	-1.319	-1.792**	.049**

Where: Y = personal involvement in the innovation,
X1 = information support,
X2 = emotional support,
X1X2 = the cross product of information support and emotional support

*$p \leq .05$
**$p \leq .10$

Note: Regression coefficient shown for equation 2 is for b3.

Figure 6

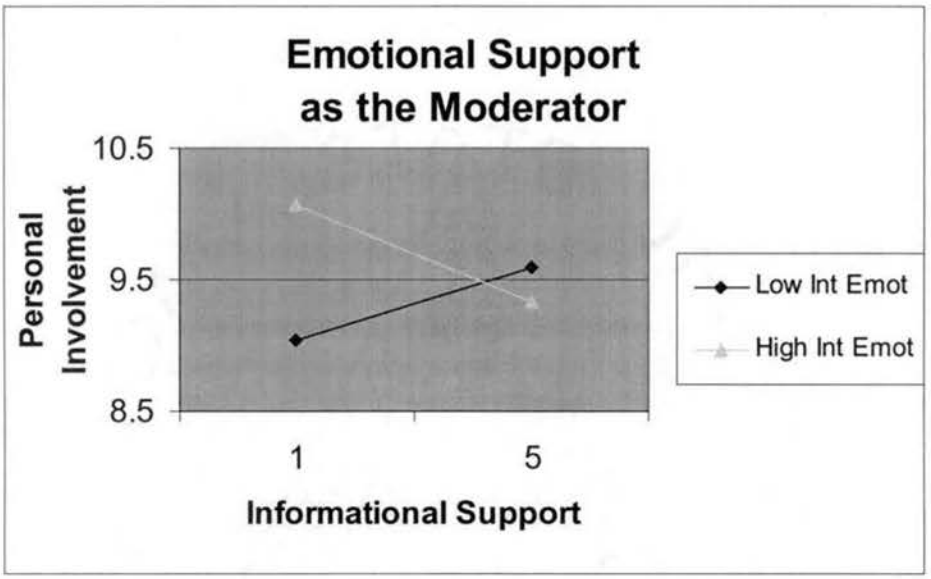


Figure 6 shows a plot of the interaction that indicates when emotional support is low, increased information increases personal involvement in the innovation. Furthermore, when emotional support is high, increased information will not increase personal involvement. Other than at very high levels of informational support, high emotional support increases personal involvement in the innovation.

Finally, equations for the moderated mediation model were tested with the results as shown in Table 12. Equation 1 examined the relationship between problem solving style to the dependent variable, personal involvement in the innovation and found it significant ($p<.05$). Equation 2 analyzed the effect of the mediator (information support) and the moderator (emotional support) on the dependent variable, personal involvement in the innovation. The regression coefficient was significant however, the F value was not ($p<.10$). To test the full moderated mediation model, equation 3 examined all the

TABLE 12

RESULTS OF MODERATED MEDIATION MODEL

Equations	Regression Coefficient	R Square	Adj. R Square	F Value
1) Y = b0 + b1X1 + e	.199*	.040	.030	4.037*
2) Y = b0 + b1X2 + b2X3 + b3X2X3 + e	-1.319**	.056	.027	1.911
3) Y = b0 + b1X1+ b2X2 + b3X3 + b4X2X3 + e	-1.445**	.086	.048	2.249*

Where: Y = personal involvement in the innovation,
X1 = problem solving style,
X2 = information support (MEDIATOR),
X3 = emotional support (MODERATOR),
X2X3 = the cross product of information support and emotional support (MEDIATOR x MODERATOR)

*p ≤. 05
**p ≤ .10

variables (i.e., problem solving style, information support, emotional support), as well as the interaction of the mediator moderator (information support X emotional support). The regression coefficient was significant ($p<.10$) as was the F value ($p<.05$).

Summary

The study analysis was presented in this section with mixed results. Contrary to expectations, the innovator problem solving style was positively related to both external informational social support as well as internal informational social support. Innovators receive informational support from inside and outside the organization. A significant

relationship was not found for informational social support and personal involvement in the innovation. In addition, emotional social support moderated the relationship between informational social support and personal involvement in the organization. Finally, the moderated mediation model was also significant. These results imply certain conclusions and implications that will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses the main conclusions suggested by the study results. A comparison is made to some previous results and possible explanations are provided for non-hypothesized results. Implications of these findings for organizational change are also discussed. Finally, the contributions this research has made to the areas of organizational behavior and human resource management are explored.

Conclusions

This study indicates that innovators receive informational social support from internal and external colleagues. Innovators, unlike adaptors, bring change to the organization. They are characterized as high achievers who look outside the current paradigm (Kirton, 1994; Rogers, 1995). Innovators have their own social networks from which they get information. Network members usually come from other organizations, where an innovation may have been adopted or implemented already. On the other hand, persons within the organization are assumed to view the innovator as a maverick and are unwilling to provide support for his/her ideas (Rogers, 1995). Although this may be the case for some internal colleagues, this study indicates that innovators also get informational support from inside the organization.

Adaptors in the organization are concerned with the more traditional problems of the organization, providing it the stability it needs (Kirton, 1994). There may be however, other innovators in the organization who can and will provide informational

support to fellow innovators. These people may reside in different departments in the organization but due to their personality likeness, spend a great deal of time interacting and consequently exchanging information. It is also possible that although adaptors themselves are not proactive about making changes, they could be well read and able to provide information to those in the organization that would pursue an idea and seek to implement it.

There was no support for more information contributing to more involvement in implementing or adopting an innovation. This relationship was probably unsubstantiated due to additional factors that have to be considered such as social and organizational support. In any organization, much information is received, some of which may be relevant to the internal operations of the organization. However, it would be impossible to act upon all information and therefore bounded rationality has to dictate the decision making process. The decision maker would use heuristics and look at the first option that is satisfactory. Managers have limits for their rationality due to time pressures and uncertainty. Uncertainty is magnified with an innovation because of the risk involved in adopting or implementing something new to the organization.

An important finding from this study is the moderating effect of emotional support in the decision making process. When emotional support was low, increased information increased personal involvement in the innovation. Conversely, when emotional support was high, increased information did not increase personal involvement. In fact, when emotional support was high, more information slightly decreased personal involvement in the innovation. This finding seems counter intuitive until one considers the characteristics of emotional support. Emotional support involves acts of listening,

providing empathy, and showing care for another. It may be that too much of that type behavior in an organization is counter productive to individual performance. An employee who is spending a lot of time talking to others and receiving empathy will not be focused on getting the job done. In addition, this employee will not feel the need to be productive because he/she has the approval of others already. This finding is important because it suggest an optimum level for the receipt of social support, too much of which is detrimental. This finding is similar to the Yerkes Dodson law, which indicates that stress also has an optimum point for improving performance (Yerkes and Dodson, 1908). Too much (as well as too little) stress is considered harmful causing strain for the individual.

Finally, this model indicated a moderated mediation relationship that investigates when as well as how problem solving style is related to personal involvement in the innovation. In this analysis social support was found to be a mediator (informational social support) as well as a moderator (emotional social support). This is consistent with previous research on social support that has found direct, mediating, and moderating effects (Dormann and Zaph, 1999; Hagihara, Tarumi, and Miller, 1998; Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996)

Dormann and Zaph (1999) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the moderating effects of social support for colleague and supervisor support. They found a moderating effect for supervisor support and their inability to detect a moderating effect for colleague support may be attributed to using structural equation modeling which has not been perfected for use in moderation analysis. Additionally, Hagihara, Tarumi, and Miller (1998) concluded that specific dimensions of social support might interact with

particular work stressors. Lastly, Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser (1996) used health and stress to demonstrate that the presence of social support leads to positive outcomes.

Implications

The success of organizations will depend upon the ability to refresh the organization with new ideas as problems occur or to anticipate changes that could produce challenges to the organization. Problem solving is an essential part of the responsibility of all managers in the organization, but especially important for those with decision-making authority. Some problems to be solved involve investigating new courses of actions, new procedures, or other information for solutions that have not been previously used within the organization. To effectively provide solutions for the competitiveness of the organization, managers must utilize multiple sources to obtain this information. One of the least understood, but probably most used resource is other people. Effective work relationships that provide support to one another will be crucial to addressing and resolving current and future problems and challenges of the organization.

The positive effect of social support has been demonstrated in numerous studies in the health and medicine areas (Dormann and Zapf, 1999; Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). However, relatively few studies have investigated the effect of social support at work. Some studies have shown that social support reduces stress and the effects of stress in the workplace (Jonge et al, 2001; Ducharme and Martin, 2000), but the findings from this research indicate that the beneficial effects of social support go beyond health and well-being. Some forms of social support influence the problem

solving process and may lead to better decisions. In turn, social support may eliminate the adoption of ineffective innovations and increase the implementation of effective ones. In addition, innovators, who are the major proponents of change in the organization, rely on both internal and external information sources. A most important finding is that innovators need emotional support to be motivated to pursue organizational change. This is especially true when there is limited information available such as is the case in today's global competitive environment. However, the emotional support given should not interfere with performance. Since there seems to be an optimal level of social support, there has to be a limit to the amount provided, especially for emotional support.

This study also implied adaptors give an organization balance by providing stability. They are not information seekers but are more concerned about maintaining the status quo. Adaptors are as crucial to the organization as innovators. Their sense of contentment may also allow them the confidence to provide the informational and emotional support to the innovators of the organization. If adaptors are comfortable in their roles, they are more likely to support others in the organization, like the innovators who are originating new ideas.

The social relations of employees could also impact organizational, or at least, work group commitment, productivity and job satisfaction. Employees who are supported at work will be more committed to their colleagues and experience more satisfaction in doing their work. Workers who are adequately supported at work should also have improved psychosocial and behavior health, not only at work but off the job as well (Ducharme and Martin, 2000). These spillover effects should be seen in family relationships, in community interactions, as well as in other non-work settings.

Finally, as organizations flatten and become more organic, relationships among workers will become more important. The mechanistic organization based on structure and control becomes extinct and the new organization evolves with an environment of informal structures and networks of interpersonal relationships. Organizations with organic designs are important in dynamic environments that require flexibility to deal with change.

Limitations

This study was subject to several limitations that could affect the analysis and findings. First, all data was self-reported by the respondents. Respondents completed a questionnaire during their own time either online or by completing a paper copy. When all data comes from one source the potential for problems associated with common method variance is increased. Therefore, the relationship between the variables could have been overstated due to common variance that may exist. Previous meta-analyses have shown that common method variance did not invalidate many research findings and usually only in certain domain-specific areas of research, such as job satisfaction and performance appraisal (Crampton and Wagner, 1994; Doty and Glick, 1998).

The second limitation of the study was the low response rate. Although 63 SHRM chapters were contacted, which represented almost 6,000 members; only 182 total responses were received. Due to privacy concerns, contact was only possible with the president of each chapter whose telephone number was listed on the SHRM web site. The chapter presidents agreed to distribute questionnaires and information to their members, but there was no way to determine if they actually did so.

The third major limitation of the study was its cross-sectional nature, which only gave a snapshot of one period in time. Respondents were asked to report any HRM innovations within the last year. In addition, the questions asked to determine problem-solving style should have had minimum changes since they ascertained personality characteristics, which are by definition stable. However, a longitudinal study may have provided additional information on how social support changes over time.

Research Contributions

This study has made several contributions to research in both organizational behavior and human resource management. First, it expanded the role of social support beyond that of health benefits. Previous research is fairly robust in explanations for the role of social support to reduce stress and lead to better mental and/or physical health (Dormann and Zapf, 1999; Uchino, Cacioppo, and Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Additionally, other research has shown that having social support allows one to cope with problems such as terminal illness, or even martial discord (Martire et al., 1999; Pasch and Bradbury, 1998). The ability to cope allows one to manage the problem such that it causes less stress. On the other hand, this research indicates that social support is important not only with coping with the problem, but also with eliminating it. When there is informational support, there is more involvement in trying to resolve the problem. Furthermore, when there is emotional support coming from persons in the organization, regardless of the amount of information available, there is also more resolve to find an innovation that will solve the problem. This in turn, eliminates the need for coping with that problem.

A second contribution of the research is that it adds to the body of knowledge about human resource management innovations. There is limited research specific to the area of human resource management innovations. Most of that which does exist either focus on the relationship of HRMIs to organizational performance or the organizational factors affecting HRMI, such as hierarchical level or seniority. HRMI research has not included an examination of interpersonal relations in the innovation process. This study remedies that oversight and investigates how people provide support to others that is vital to whether a human resource management innovation occurs.

And while this study focused on HR professionals, the results have implications for organizational innovations in general. Like HRMI, there has also been little or no research on interpersonal relations in other organizational innovations. Research on organizational innovations has primarily focused on the diffusion of an innovation, the determinants of innovativeness, and/or the stages in the innovation process. Previous research has not attempted to explain the individual behavioral effects that occur during the innovation process. The results of this study imply that information and emotional support would affect whether a proposed innovation becomes more than an idea on paper.

Another contribution of this research is it bridges a piece of the gap between organizational behavior and human resource management research. Human resource management focuses on the practices involved in carrying out the "people aspect" in the organization while organizational behavior research attempts to understand the actions of the "people in the organization," individually as well as interpersonally. Both areas of study provide a snapshot in which "people in the organization" is the common denominator. It is reasonable then that there would be overlapping explanations for

practices and behavior when people are viewed from the big picture. This groundbreaking study combined the two snapshots and gave us an idea of the big picture. The results of the study indicate that social support is a part of the human resource management innovation process.

Finally, the results of this study indicate the importance of emotional social support for decision-making when there is limited information as is the case in today's dynamic, competitive environment. Change is inevitable and those who can respond quickly to competition and other fluctuations in the environment will outdistance those who cannot. Conner (1992) discussed interaction among members of an organization as a necessary requirement for the synergistic relationship needed to produce something new. Interaction included effective communication, active listening, and trust. All of these elements are aspects of providing emotional social support. People who have someone they trust to talk to and who listens empathetically, are more apt to increase their self-confidence for taking risks and making decisions.

Future Research

Future research on the relationship between social support and the HRM innovation process should investigate other types of social support. This study examined emotional and informational support as factors influencing the HRM innovation process; however there may be some support also for appraisal and instrumental social support. Instrumental support involves acts that directly help employees, such as performing some task or preparing a report (House, 1981). It is likely that innovators who have colleagues willing to provide that type assistance will have more time to pursue new ideas for the

organization. Appraisal support is characterized as information given as feedback for self-evaluation (House, 1981). When persons receive positive constructive feedback, they may be more confident and likely to pursue risky ideas like HRM innovations.

Another area for future research is to determine whether there is a gender difference in the receipt and provision of social support for the HRM innovation process. It is commonly accepted that women are generally more nurturing than men and this could also impact the giving of social support. Women may be more likely to provide support in the workplace than their male counterparts. Additionally, men are taught as little boys to be masculine and "not cry" or likewise show their emotions. Consequently, men may not get support because they do not want it or seek it from others for fear of appearing weak.

Finally, future research should also investigate how social support impacts the implementation stage of the innovation process. Usually innovations are initially implemented on a trial basis and full-scale implementation comes after analyzing the results of that trial. Informational support is likely crucial to the decision-making process when determining if a trial should be extended to full implementation or discontinued completely. In addition, emotional as well as appraisal support could be influential in the final decision made for the organization.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

HRM Work Questionnaire

Section I: A human resource management innovation is a new product, service, process, program or device that is adopted in one of the HR functions of the organization. Innovations sometime occur when there is a problem or situation that requires a change from the current way of doing things.

1. In the **past year**, have you experienced or been made aware of a situation or problem that required a change in the current way of doing things?

____ Yes **____ No, Skip to Section IV**

2. Please briefly identify the problem or situation:

_____

3. In what function of the company, did the problem occur? Check all that apply.

____ Recruitment and Selection **____ Performance Appraisal**

____ Training and Development **____ Rewards and Benefits**

____ Organizational Design **____ Communication**

____ Other, specify _____

4. To what extent did you **personally** investigate the use of a new product, service, process, program, or device (that had not been used before in the company) as the solution to the problem?

Not At All				To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

5. To what extent did you **personally** take action to insure the adoption of the new product, service, process, program, or device for implementation in the company?

Not At All				To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

Please provide any comments on your actions during the innovation process:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. To what extent was the new product, service, process, program, or device implemented in the company?

Not At All				Completely
1	2	3	4	5

IN THE NEXT TWO SECTIONS CONTINUE TO THINK ABOUT HRM INNOVATIONS FROM THE PAST YEAR WHILE YOU ALSO FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES.

Section II: All the following questions relate to your colleagues WITHIN your company. Think of your colleagues WITHIN your company as you respond to these statements.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. My colleagues are very concerned about my welfare.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can talk to my colleagues if I have a problem at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My colleagues give me feedback on how well I am performing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I respect the opinion of my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My colleagues make suggestions that are helpful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My colleagues provide assistance when I have problems with my workload.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My colleagues take a personal interest in me.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My colleagues have introduced me to people they know in other companies.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I receive praise from my colleagues for my work.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I value the advice I receive from my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My colleagues share information with me that is important for doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My colleagues are willing to evaluate my work.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My colleagues model work behaviors to which I aspire.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am close to my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My colleagues provide me referrals for getting assistance with my work.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I regularly learn something new from my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5

17. I receive objective feedback from my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I can rely on my colleagues to help me when things get tough at work.	1	2	3	4	5

Section III: Now Think Of Your Business Associates OUTSIDE Your Company.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. My business associates are very concerned about my welfare.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can talk to my business associates if I have a problem at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I respect the opinion of my business associates.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My business associates make suggestions that are helpful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My business associates take a personal interest in me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My business associates have introduced me to people they know in other companies.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I value the advice I receive from my business associates.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My business associates share information with me that is important for doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am close to my business associates.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My business associates provide me referrals for getting assistance with my work.	1	2	3	4	5

Section IV: Problem Solving Style

How difficult or easy is it for you to do and maintain each of these behaviors at work?

	Very Difficult				Very Easy
1. Conform	1	2	3	4	5
2. Be Thorough	1	2	3	4	5
3. Be Stimulating	1	2	3	4	5
4. Be prudent when dealing with authority	1	2	3	4	5
`5. Enjoy detailed work	1	2	3	4	5
6. Have original ideas	1	2	3	4	5
7. Master all details painstakingly	1	2	3	4	5
8. Proliferate ideas	1	2	3	4	5
9. Be methodical and systematic	1	2	3	4	5
10. Have fresh perspectives on old problems	1	2	3	4	5

11. Fit readily into the 'system'	1	2	3	4	5
12. Cope with several new ideas at the same time	1	2	3	4	5
13. Never act without proper authority	1	2	3	4	5

Section V: Demographics

Please check correct response or fill in blank as appropriate.

Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Age Range: _____20-29 _____30-39 _____40-49
(Years) _____50-59 _____60-69 _____70 or More

Highest Education Level:
____High School or equivalent ____ Some College or equivalent
____ Bachelor Degree ____ Master Degree ____ Ph.D

Race: _____ Marital Status: _____

Current Position/Title: _____

Length of Time in Current Position: _____ Length of Time in HR Profession: _____

Organization Industry Type _____

Are you a SHRM member? _____ Chapter Name _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CARE IN COMPLETING THIS IMPORTANT QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT YOUR WORK.

If you would like to be included in a drawing for a $100 Gift Certificate from Amazon.com, please include your name and a contact number below.

Name _____

Contact # _____

Mail in the enclosed envelope or to: Millicent Nelson
311 College of Business
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078
OR Fax to Millicent Nelson at 405-744-5180 (Remember to fax all pages)

APPENDIX B

KIRTON'S ADAPTORS AND INNOVATORS (KAI) MODIFIED

Sufficiency of Originality
Proliferates ideas
Has original ideas
Has fresh perspectives on old problems
Is stimulating
Copes with several new ideas at same time

Efficiency
Is methodical and systematic
Is thorough
Enjoys detailed work
Masters all details painstakingly

Rule Governance
Conforms
Fits readily into the 'system'
Is prudent when dealing with authority
Never acts without proper authority

APPENDIX C

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Emotional
I can talk to my colleagues if I have a problem at work.
I am close to my colleagues.
I respect the opinion of my colleagues.
My colleagues take a personal interest in me.
My colleagues are very concerned about my welfare.

Informational
My colleagues have introduced me to people they know in other companies.
My colleagues make suggestions that are helpful to me.
My colleagues provide me referrals for getting assistance with my work.
My colleagues share information with me that is important for doing my job.
I value the advice I receive from my colleagues.

Instrumental
My colleagues provide assistance when I have problems with my workload.
I can rely on my colleagues to help me when things get tough at work.
My colleagues model work behaviors to which I aspire.
I regularly learn something new from my colleagues.

Appraisal
My colleagues are willing to evaluate my work
I receive objective feedback from my colleagues.
I receive praise from my colleagues for my work.
My colleagues give me feedback on how well I am performing my job.

APPENDIX D

STUDY APPROVAL FROM INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 10/2/2003

Date: Thursday, October 03, 2002 IRB Application No BU033

Proposal Title: THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL SUPPORT ON THE ADOPTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INNOVATIONS: A PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH

Principal Investigator(s):

Millicent Nelson
311 College of Business
Stillwater, OK 74078

Thomas Stone
417 Business
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA 2

MILLICENT FAYE NELSON

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL SUPPORT ON THE ADOPTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INNOVATIONS: A PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

Major Field: Business Administration

Biographical:

Education: B.S., 1977, Lane College, Jackson, TN, Business, Magna Cum Laude; M.B.A., 1979, Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA, Management and Finance; Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at Oklahoma State University in August, 2003.

Experience: Consortiums: 2002 Academy of Management Doctoral Consortium, HR Division; 2001 Southern Management Association Doctoral Consortium; 2000 Academy of Management Doctoral Consortium, OB Division

Conference Participant: Reviewer, 2003 Academy of Management; Reviewer and Session Chair, 2001 Southern Management Association, New Orleans; Session Chair, 2000 Southern Management Association, Orlando

Additional Presentations: 2002 KPMG Ph.D. Project Management Doctoral Students Association, Denver; 2001 KPMG Ph.D. Project Management Doctoral Students Association, Washington, D.C.; 2000 KPMG Ph.D. Project Management Doctoral Association, Toronto

Professional Memberships: Academy of Management, Southern Management Association; Society for Human Resource Management; National Black MBA Association; KPMG Ph.D. Management Doctoral Student Association

Academic Awards and Honors: 2001 OSU CBA Outstanding Graduate Teaching Associate, General Board of Global Ministries Crusade Scholarship, Oklahoma State University Presidential Scholarship, Lane College Scroll of Achievement, Outstanding Young Women of America