

# Association among Workplace Innovation, Employee Innovativeness and Job Performance: Empirical Validation in Context of Knowledge-Based Organizations



Khan Mohsin, Raya R. Prabhakara

**Abstract**— *New technologies have changed the way we live, consume and meet people. The Industrial Internet is changing the way we work and manufacture as the Internet has changed our lives. The digital revolution is taking place. Many industries are undergoing rapid and dramatic changes, others are going to develop slowly and steadily. There is no return in any case. Clearly, success in the new industrial revolution needs our businesses to make use of the best technologies available. But the response is not software alone. They need to focus more on human factors. This is world's main resource and we are not making enough use of it. WPI is not only aimed at promoting creative skills, it also allows businesses to stay competitive and respond quicker and easier to changes. In reality many of the organizational interventions aimed at improving employee performance and engagement are actually against employee well-being needs and goals. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to examine the nature, extent, the association and influencing factors of workplace innovation. The primary objective of this exploratory research is three-fold. First, this study attempted to explore the factors, perceived by knowledge professionals to be critical to their innovativeness, job performance and engagement. Second, to provide knowledge based organizations with an integrated framework of workplace innovation based on both the empirical findings and building on existing research.*

**Keywords:** *Workplace Innovation, Job Performance, Innovativeness, HRM, Workplace Culture.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the economic development and the greatest urgency for continuous innovation and sustainable growth to maintain the global competitiveness of the organizations, workplace innovation (hereafter referred to as WPI) has recently gained in importance at strategy level. Workplace innovation (WPI) is seen as a contribution to organizational and employee development, and

competitiveness; this includes practices that improve the employability of employees, resulting in increased productivity and improved job satisfaction, job performance, employee well-being and Innovativeness. Workplace innovation (WPI) is, therefore, a cross-cutting strategic issue that concerns each type of organizations. WPI is being evolved and newly developed concept, and its in tandem with other forms of creativity, in general, and organizational and process innovation, in particular. WPI combines a big range of employee oriented practices used at workplace in day to day working with a great positive impact on employees and also for organizational development.

In an ideal working environment, structures and relationships will work together around fundamental values that transcend personal interests. An organization's culture is useful for the innovation and to meet the future needs of an organization and the well-being of employees who work there. Managers within organizations feel through senses that culture is useful on the one hand, and on the other hand, it may be hard to define one's culture & its emergence and to model it in order to support innovation in the workplace. The literature on organizational culture, following Peters and Waterman (1982), state that shared values represent the core of organizational culture. The study conducted by Hofstede (1998), however, with the support of data established that "the common perceptions of everyday practices make the core of an organization's culture. What we have called practices also be called conventions, customs, habits, mores, traditions or usages." These have already been recognized as part of the culture by Edward B. Tylor in the last century, "Culture is the only one complex set that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morality, law, customs and all other skills and habits acquired by man as a member of society"(Taylor, 1924).

### *Towards the definition of WPI*

Before reviewing existing WPI literature, it is important to know the significance of two primary phrases, i.e. workplace and innovation. The workplace concept discourse is complex and rich in numerous complexities. Historically, the workplace can be defined as the result of the cultural workplace evaluation process (Meskill & Preucel, 2004; Cresswell, 2015). Sums up the entire structure of social, organizational and design elements in which the job is performed.

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The notion of the workplace depicts the spatiality that arises from the organizational human capital and/ or the physical space that concretely defines an organization (Vaujany & Mitev, 2013). The workplace is influenced by multiple organizational ideologies: economic psychology, space sociology, architectural sociology, socio-materiality, etc. The researchers consider the concept of the workplace to be multidimensional (Delbridge & Sallaz, 2015). If the fairly static vision of the workplace examines it as the abstract limits of social life, the dynamic vision of the workplace explores the process of restructuring. Workplace determines the (re)products, innovation process, and creativity. Historically, attempts have been made to know about these processes of work, and tools to address them with the evolution of researches related to innovation. There has been no precise meaning since the early nineties, when the WPI began to emerge as a speech (Ichniowski, 1996). What, different WPI definitions had in common was the fact that they had moved away from the typical clichéd Fordist notion of workplaces. All non-traditional efforts in the workplace were collectively linked to “WPI”. Although, workplace innovation emerged since the very beginning of the 1960s, but due to underdeveloped methods and cultural immorality, it was neither common, nor widely accepted, and therefore, was not considered as innovation (Ruostela et al., 2015).

According to Pot (2011), workplace innovation is “the implementation of new and combined interventions in the field of work organizations, human resource management, and supportive technologies.” He considers “workplace innovation to be complementary to technological innovation.

### II. RESEARCH TRADITIONS ON WORKPLACE INNOVATION (WPI)

Innovation is not limited up to technological innovation or economic innovation only, but the emphasis should also be given to workplace innovation by the organizations Pot et al., (2012). This has to do with, among other things, the increasing complexity of innovation issues and, in addition, the greater interdependence between the human and organizational factors that are needed to make innovations work successfully (Howald & Schwarz, 2010). Second, “workplace innovation is an important way to strengthen a company’s competitive advantage” (Oeij, et al. 2012; Totterdill, Cressey & Exton 2012). Isa and Tsuru (2002), referred to WPI as a special form of organizational mechanism consisting of new types of work organisation and flexible working based on employee engagement and performance. Among the early concepts of this new organizational approach related to Lawler, who figures out the main features of implementing high-involvement management, job design, thinking teams (Lawler, 1986 and Ferreira et al., 2010).

### III. ENABLERS/DETERMINANTS OF WPI

WPI may be measure the following dimensions based on the components present in the culture of the organization, which strengthens to what degree workers are improving and making full use of their creative potential. Self-organized teamwork, Structured opportunities for reflection, training

and improvement; active participation in innovative practices; promotion of entrepreneurship at all levels of the organization; and inclusion of workers in strategic decision-making. WPI is categorized into four main areas by Totterdill & Exton (2014)”.  
*The First Enabler: Organizing smarter (job design and work organization)*

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Smarter organization of work provides opportunities for employees to participate in the decision-making process of organization that maintains a democratic workplace. The first step was taking into account the core elements of work organization in different areas of day to day work at workplace: work process, division of work, managerial hierarchy, employee representation, etc. Maximum participation and equal treatment at workplace have led to incentive programs and benefits, and promoting the idea of community. Such a change of democracy in the workplace has enhanced the mutual trust between an employee and employer.

*The Second Enabler: Working flexible (structures and systems);*

To cope with the changing environment, a workplace needs to be flexible. It is important that society does have a clear vision and direction for growth in a competitive democratic environment while preserving sufficient flexibility in its approach. Flexibility, accountability, synergy, networking and partnership must in fact be a policy of integration for organizational excellence. Flexibility is not only a change, but a process of constant change in line with changing priorities (Sushil 2000, Sharma & Jain, 2010,).

*The Third Enabler: Strategic Orientation (learning, future markets, and innovation)*

Strategic Orientation refers to how much an organization has the flexibility to adapt to changes. (For example, changes in the internal and/or external environment.) Strategic orientation may result in higher customer satisfaction and employee engagement. In an encouraging step, (Narver and Slater 1990) reports empirical support to synthesizes between strategic orientation and employee performance. Ultimately, changes in the Strategic Orientation have always accompanied other types of WPI implementation. Organizations have discovered new work systems to improve the motivation of employees through inclusion and participation programs (Leigh & Gifford, 1999, Martin & Healy, 2009).

*The Fourth Enabler: Use of Technology (workplace partnership)*

At the beginning of the paperless office, the Information technology infrastructure (intranet, applications, or archiving) process and manage the information; subsequent technological and digital developments have created space for radical innovation in various areas of organizational life (Valcour & Hunter, 2005). Information Technology enabled work has changed the dynamics of working together.

The change is profound because information technology enabled the people sitting in different geographical locations, sometimes time zones, may be able to participate in the discussions unlike the situation where logistics on physical presence needs to be organized and to decide “of who to participate, when participation take place, and where it happens” (Beblavý, et al., 2012). Developments in mobile technologies have resulted in a series of online work styles that have enabled employees to work from home or from the office, provide instant customer service, pursue professional activities during business trips, and avoid traffic jams and geo-efficient work planning during business trips (Kalmi & Kauhanen, 2008).

#### IV. OTHER KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY JOB PERFORMANCE

Job performance is "defined as the total expected value for organizing discrete behavioral episodes performed by a person over a standard period of time." In this definition, an important idea is that quality is a dimension of actions. In particular, it is a global dimension of multiple and discrete behaviors occurring over a period of time. An important second idea is that the behavioral dimension to which the performance refers to the expected value for the organization. Therefore the performance with this definition compares between the set of behaviors of the individual and groups in the different time span and also at the same time. Studies have correlated culture with many aspects of organizational behavior within the organization. They also acknowledged the "correlation between employees' organizational culture and job success (Sheridan, 1992), decision-making (Gamble & Gibson, 1999) and productivity (Kopelman, Brief & Guzzo, 1990)".

##### *Employee Innovativeness*

The fundamental role of innovation in organizations is sustainable longer-term survival (Ancona & Caldwell, 1987). Among social scientists and practitioners, this is of ongoing concern. Because innovation is based on ideas, it is the people who create, transport, respond and change ideas (Van de Ven, 1986), it is crucial to study what motivates or allows the behavior to be independently innovated. However, West and Farr (1989) noticed that "there has been little attention to innovation at the level of individuals and groups".

#### V. OBJECTIVE

The present study is focus on to examine the extent to which workplace innovation is associated with its consequences.

#### VI. RESEARCH DESIGN

This article is a part of the doctoral dissertation titled ‘Culture of Workplace Innovation in knowledge-Based Organization (KBOs): with reference to IT and ITeS Companies in the national Capital Region (NCR) of India’, wherein, the primary objective is to develop a model to identify the status of WPI, examine the association among the determinants of WPI and its consequences. The results are based on the perception of knowledge professionals working

in information technology (IT) companies in the National Capital Region of India. Because IT firms have little distinction with regard to physical work environment, job assignments, employee status, social relationships with regard to their profession with regard to clients and consumers, responses are obtained from large randomly selected IT parks as a reflection of the population universe. This method has helped to manage the research tool inside well-defined IT firms to relate the characteristics of the business—WPI, Job Performance and Employee Innovativeness could be identified. In all the cases, the researcher restricted the analysis to NCR only. A total response of 481 responses has been through personal administration.

#### VII. METHODS

The current study has used both primary and secondary data to arrive at different variables to be used for constructing the questionnaire. Primary data pertaining to the variables under study and demographic profile of IT employees were gathered through survey method by distributing a 50-item questionnaire. A pilot study is conducted to test-retest the questionnaire. Since, a sample of 400 has been recommended as sufficient for a very large population, therefore to get the desired sample size : 600 Questionnaire were given to respondents directly to collect data, 502 filled questionnaire were received out of which 21 were excluded because of incomplete data or unengaged responses. The remaining usable questionnaire were 481 with a rejection rate of 20%. Hence 481 responses were found complete in all aspects and hence, the final sample size arrived at for this study is 481, which is well above the requisite minimum.

#### VIII. DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGY

Accordingly, to accomplish objectives of this research, certain analytical tools and software packages were exercised to draw meaningful conclusions from the raw data available. The statistical packages namely Using SPSS v20 and v25 as well as AMOS v2.0. Descriptive methods are used to define the profile of the participants and their responses to the factors used in this research. Respondents are included those operating in the Delhi NCR from small, moderate to large IT organizations (N= 481). To determine the association if any, correspondence analysis was used to assess the connection between workplace innovation-its determinants and consequences. Correspondence analysis is a method that is used for categorical variables. In this research, however, the variables provided were evaluated on a continuous scale. Therefore, the ongoing variables were categorized into distinct clusters using K-means clustering before proceeding for testing association. Later, the Chi-square independence test was used to assess whether an important association exists between i) Organizing smarter and employee innovativeness, ii) Working flexible and employee innovativeness, iii) use of hi-tech application and employee innovativeness iv) Strategic orientation and employee innovativeness,

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v) Organizing smarter and job performance vi) Working flexible and job performance vii) Use of hi-tech application and job performance viii) Strategic orientation and job performance, Finally, variables that were significantly associated were subjected to correspondence analysis to depict graphically which groups of any two variables are closely associated.

### IX. FINDINGS: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Out of 481 participants, the gender-based distribution of participants the majority of participants (56.1) percent who replied favourably to this research are male. However, in engaging in the study, Female is also not far behind and constitutes (43.9) percent of the respondent. the bulk of respondents (57.2) percent are young IT experts have the age of 20-30 years, followed by the 30-35 age group and the least participants belong to the over 35 age group. Educational qualification of the respondents reveals that graduates are the largest proportion of participants (52.6) percent, followed by postgraduates in management (38.9) percent and others' master degree (8.5). Over 47.4 percent of the participants are therefore post graduates. Respondent designation was categorized into three hierarchies, i.e. (1) entry level executives (2) middle management executives, (3) senior level management. Data demonstrates that the majority (62.6 percent) of participants are identified at the entry level executives. At middle-level, 30 percent of participants are surveyed. (7.3 percent) of participants are senior level management.

Perception of knowledge professionals regarding workplace innovation in Indian IT organizations is profiled by using descriptive statistics and cluster analysis. Simple mean, standard deviation and standard error are descriptive

statistics used for this goal. Simple mean defines respondents' mean level perception towards WPI in the organization. Standard deviation provides data about the mean spread of responses. In general, the standard deviation of less than 1 shows that the deviation from the representative means that it is minimal. Standard error indicates the deviation of sample mean, from the population. Normal mistake near to zero generally means that the mean sample score is close to the mean population value.

**Table 1: Mean estimates of workplace Innovation**

<b>N</b>	<b>481</b>
<b>Minimum</b>	<b>1.96</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>4.35</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.52</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>0.567</b>
<b>SE</b>	<b>0.624</b>

**Note: N- No. of Responses, SD- Standard Deviation; SE- Standard Error Source: Primary data**

### X. CLUSTERING WORKPLACE INNOVATION'S DETERMINANTS AND CONSEQUENCES

The results of cluster analysis for the variables namely organizing smarter, working flexible, use of hi-tech application, strategic orientation, job performance, work engagement and employee innovativeness are presented in Table-2. K-means clustering resulted with three distinct groups for each variable and the groups are named after the mean values obtained for each category of respondents.

**Table 2: Clustering of study constructs**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Cluster name</b>	<b>No. of employees in each cluster</b>	<b>Mean Values for each cluster</b>	<b>Cluster no.</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Organizing Smarter	Unorganized	74	2.11	I	1149.29	***
	Better Organized	294	4.27	II		
	Moderately organized	113	3.3	III		
Working flexible	Moderate flexibility	196	3.23	I	843.43	***
	Less flexibility	63	2.14	II		
	High flexibility	222	4.14	III		
Strategic orientation	Low orientation	64	2.43	I	776.67	***
	Moderate orientation	221	3.51	II		
	High orientation	196	4.21	III		
Use of Hi-tech application	High use	176	3.46	I	1174.65	***
	Low use	157	2.13	II		
	Moderate use	148	2.91	III		

Job performance	Low performance	71	2.73	I	967.42	***
	High performance	287	4.19	II		
	Moderate performance	123	3.54	III		
Employee Innovativeness	Moderate innovativeness	200	2.97	I	846.77	***
	High innovativeness	113	3.28	II		
	Low innovativeness	168	2.14	III		

Source: Primary data

**XI. RELIABILITY OF CLUSTER SEGMENTATION**

Using discriminant analyses, the reliability and stability of the cluster segmentation across the sampled information is checked. Discriminant analysis is carried out as follows in this research. Four WPI dimensions namely organizing smarter, flexible working, strategic orientation and use of

hi-tech applications at workplace are taken into account as independent variables and cluster segmentation is used as a grouping variable (dependent variable) to determine the reliability of cluster segmentation. To verify the importance of the discriminating feature, it is necessary to closely observe its Eigen value, canonical correlation and Wilks' Lambda scores.

**Table 3: Reliability of the Segmentation – WPI**

Function	Eigen value	% of Variance	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	1.304a	68	0.752	0.269	626.015	8	0
2	.615a	32	0.617	0.619	228.265	3	0

Source: Primary data

**Table 4.: Structure Matrix – WPI**

WPI Dimensions	Function	
	1	2
Working flexible	.815*	-0.307
Organizing Smarter	.554*	0.486
Strategic Orientation	.495*	0.218
Tech-App	0.551	.661*

Source: Primary data

**XII. CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF ASSOCIATION**

Chi-square test was carried out to test the association between the clusters of Workplace innovation determinants

and consequences. If Chi-square values are significant at  $p < 0.05$ , then there is a significant association between the clusters of any two variables.

**Table 5: Chi-square test results for association**

Variable	Chi-square value	Sig.
OS and JP	67.474	***
OS and EMPinn	56.916	***
OS and WE	22.671	***
WF and JP	58.784	***
WF and EMPinn	15.406	**
WF and WE	107.363	***
STO and JP	119.86	***

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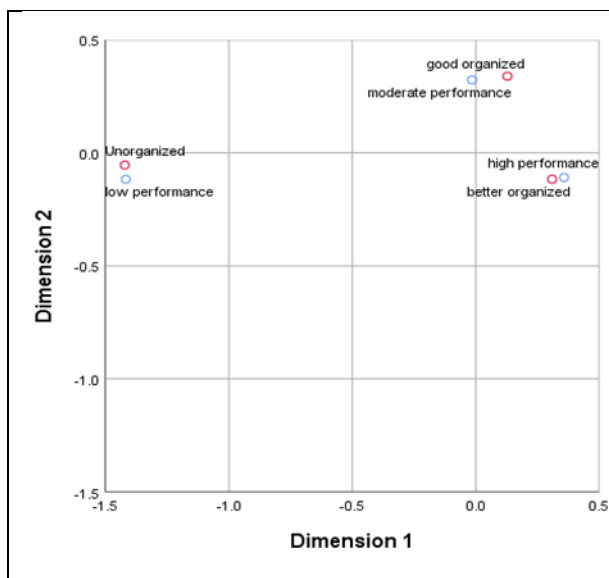
STO and EMPinn	16.877	**
STO and WE	42.914	***
TA and JP	30.714	***
TA and EMPinn	50.355	***
TA and WE	43.178	***
WE and JP	43.193	***
JP and EMPinn	7.475	0.113

Source: Primary data

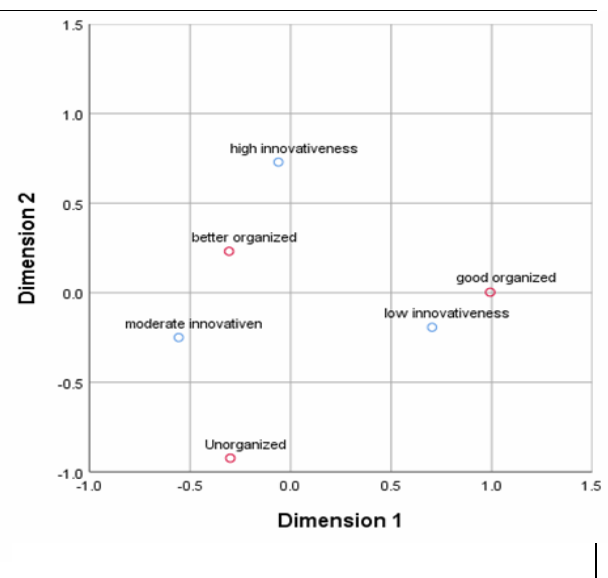
**XIII. CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS FOR ASSOCIATION**

Confirming with the significance of association between determinants of WPI (OS, WF, TA and St.Ori) and JP, WE and EMPinn, correspondence analysis was carried out to determine which groups of two variables are associated

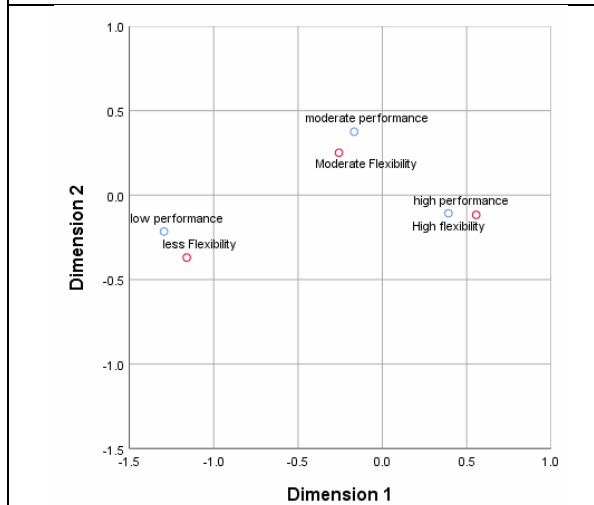
with each other. Correspondence analysis was conducted to elucidate certain characteristics of employees based on their level of engagement at work. Hence, the association between the variables was tested and pictorial representation of the same are depicted in Figures given below. Several interesting results are emerged from the tested associations, which are summarized below.



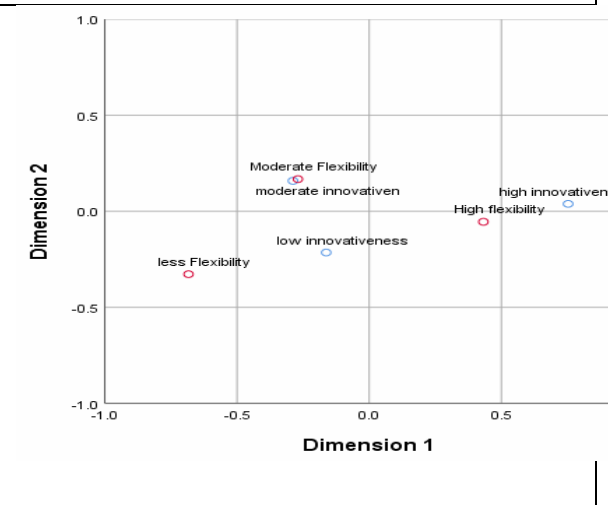
**Figure 1: Association between Clusters of organizing smarter and job performance**



**Figure 2: Association between Clusters of Organizing Smarter and Employee Innovativeness**



**Figure 3 : Association between Clusters of Working Flexible and Job Performance**



**Figure 4: Association between Clusters of working flexible and employee innovativeness**

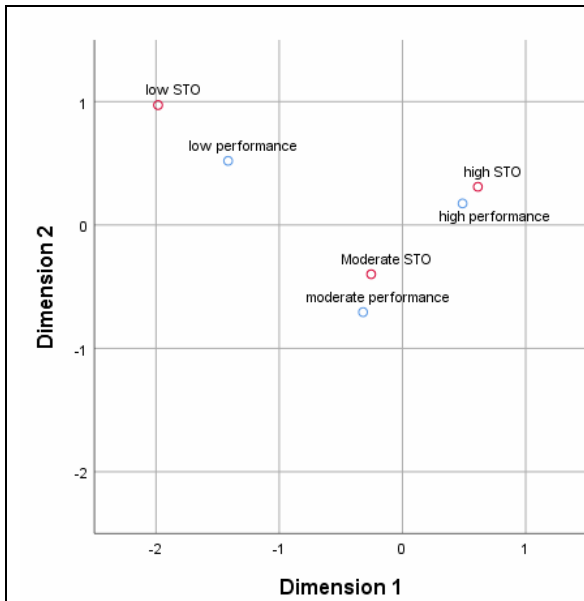


Figure 5: Association between Clusters of Strategic Orientation and Job Performance

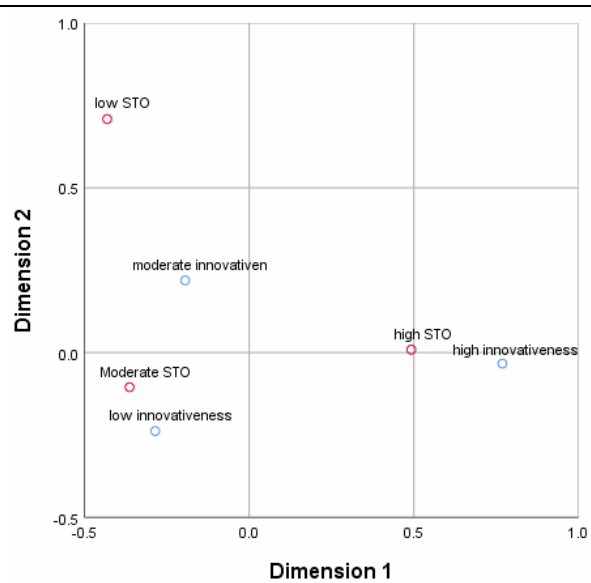


Figure 6: Association between Clusters of Strategic Orientation and Employee Innovativeness

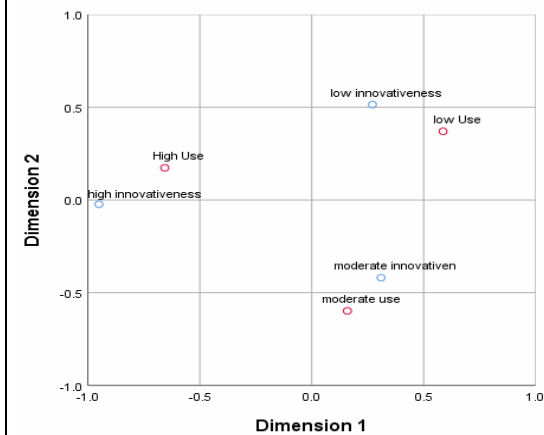


Figure 7: Association between hi-tech app Clusters and Employee Innovativeness

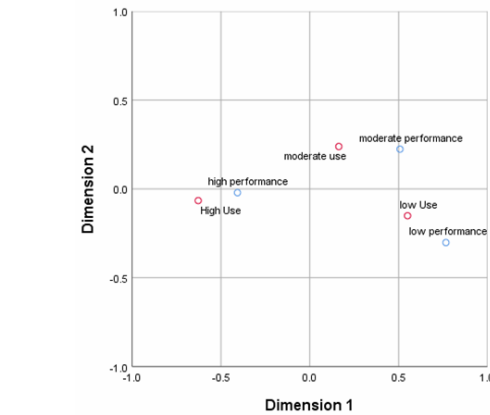


Figure 8: Association between hi-tech app Clusters and Job Performance

**XIV. DISCUSSION & RESULTS**

Studies on WPI have a rich tradition especially in the developed world, (Oeij, Hesselink & Dhondt, 2012; Eeckelaert et al., 2012; Pot, Dhondt & Oeij, 2012). The average score of 3.52 shows a boundary that determines the overall impression of perceiving workplace innovation as expressed by the participants. The comparatively greater mean (at 3.52) and a tiny standard deviation (at 0.56) indicate that the participants perceive good WPI at workplace. Relatively small standard error (0.62) indicates that the sample size is adequate. Clusters obtained related to the perception of KPs on workplace innovation dimensions. About majority of the KPs belong to cluster three which has the highest average mean (4.02) score for all the four dimensions and hence named as high WPI cluster. The second cluster accounted with the second highest mean score (3.23) and hence named as moderate WPI cluster. The first cluster has the lowest mean score of 2.20, therefore, it is named as low WPI cluster. Observation of F value (1174.65)

reveals that the use of hi-tech application at workplace dimension has the highest F value followed by organizing smarter ( $F = 1149.29, P = .000$ ), working flexible ( $F = 8.43.43, P = .000$ ) and strategic orientation ( $F = 776.67, P = .000$ ) in that order. It suggests that the use of hi-tech application is the most important dimension of a WPI. However, the other dimensions identified in this study also have a significant F value. The canonical correlation enables to assess the relationship between features and variables and finds that one feature has an elevated canonical correlation (0.752). For the first feature, Wilks' lambda is 0.269 and it is 0.619 For the second feature. Therefore, it is inferred that the group means are distinct for feature 1 and 2 (Table-3).

**XV. CONCLUSION**

Workplace innovation determinants have a significant positive association with its consequences, job performance and employee engagement.

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Organizing smarter is positively engage with the job performance, higher the autonomy to determine the working methods with having a dialogue in the organizational decision making lead to better performance of the employees. Working flexibility is also positively associated with job performance, indicates that employees need freedom for better job performance. Flexibility is also positively associated with the employee engagement resulting that employee require higher flexibility in workplace to keep themselves highly engage in the work. In specific, highly engaged employees are likely to be highly performing, well aligned to the organizational culture and have a higher tendency to produce new ideas. Moderately engaged employees seem to be fairly performing and inspired by the flexibility at the workplace. Further developed strategic orientation of the employees is also associated with the performance and the engagement of employee. And results in better the knowledge of the external environment higher will be the performance and engagement of the employees and vice-versa. Usage of hi-tech application at workplace is positively associated with innovativeness and indicates that employees feel more comfortable in using the technology while placing, promoting and realizing their ideas. And also the usage of hi-tech application helps employee to give better performance at workplace.

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