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The Moderating Role of Knowledge Inertia on the Relationship Between Organizational Learning Capability and Organizational Innovation

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to explore the role of knowledge inertia in shaping the connection between organizational learning capability and organizational innovation.

Methodology: The research employed an analytical survey approach, with a sample size of 223 out of 350 employees from Amirul-Mominin Ahvaz Hospital selected using Cochran's formula. Data was gathered through a questionnaire with established validity based on previous studies (18 questions by Yavas & Celik (2020) for organizational learning capability ($\alpha = 0.853$), 27 questions by Calik, Calisir & Cetingue (2017) for organizational innovation (α =0.879), and 14 questions by Liao, Fei & Liu (2008) for knowledge inertia (α =0.826)). Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 24 and Amos software.

Findings: Results indicated that organizational learning capability (mean = 3.27), organizational innovation (mean = 3.23), and knowledge inertia (mean = 2.20). The study confirmed a significant impact of organizational learning capability on organizational innovation (β =0.85, t-value=12.814), with knowledge inertia playing a negative moderating role in this relationship (β =-0.207, t-value=-2.168).

Conclusion: While organizational learning capability positively influences organizational innovation, the presence of knowledge inertia acts as a barrier, inhibiting the full utilization of knowledge assets.

Value: Understanding and addressing knowledge inertia can enhance organizational innovation efforts, unlocking the potential for value creation through effective knowledge utilization.

Key Words: Knowledge Inertia, Organizational Learning, Organizational Innovation.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction: Innovation is a vital activity that enhances processes and introduces new products within organizations. Consequently, leading companies must ensure conducive conditions for growth. The ability of organizations to generate value and maintain a competitive edge through innovation is crucial for economic development. In this context, innovation serves as a major driver of growth and a pivotal factor in organizational performance and competitiveness. Given the significance and necessity of innovation for organizations, it is understandable that one of the primary challenges faced by managers is examining predictors of innovation, such as learning ability. Organizational evolution hinges on experience acquisition, with organizational learning playing a central role in facilitating knowledge gain and enabling organizations to thrive in the market landscape. Through continuous learning, organizations not only identify opportunities but also forecast market trends and initiate actions that lead to enhanced products and services, thereby improving customer satisfaction and overall performance. Hence, organizational learning equips organizations with the requisite knowledge and experiences to enhance their capabilities. As most aspects of organizational learning are predominantly reactive, organizations receive new information, learn, develop fresh insights, and subsequently innovate and adapt based on acquired knowledge. The presence of knowledge inertia within an organization acts as a moderating factor, impeding the organization's ability to comprehend, create, and apply knowledge for innovation and change. Factors such as a shared vision among organization members, commitment from senior management to foster a culture of learning, an organizational environment that embraces and tests novel ideas, and mechanisms for sharing and accumulating knowledge can boost the organization's readiness to introduce new products, processes, and operational strategies. Therefore, it is imperative for organizations to shed outdated norms, values, and policies that hinder the learning process, serving as examples of knowledge inertia that constrain the impact of organizational learning capability. To address the gap and investigate why public hospitals fail to achieve expected levels of innovation despite emphasizing organizational learning, this research titled "The Effect of Organizational Learning Capability on Organizational Innovation with the Moderating Role of Knowledge Inertia at Amirul-Mominin Hospital in Ahvaz" was conducted.

Purpose: This study examines the moderating influence of knowledge inertia on the correlation between organizational learning capability and organizational innovation.

Methodology: A quantitative approach was employed for this research utilizing an analytical survey method. The statistical population comprised all 350 employees at Amirul-Mominin Ahvaz Hospital, with 223 individuals selected as the sample size using Cochran's formula. Data were collected through a questionnaire with established face validity and validated based on previous studies (18 questions by Yavas & Celik (2020) for organizational learning capability ($\alpha = 0.853$), 27 questions by Calik, Calisir & Cetinguc (2017) for organizational innovation (α =0.879), and 14 questions by Liao, Fei & Liu (2008) for knowledge inertia (α =0.826)). Data analysis was carried out using SPSS 24 and Amus software.



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Findings: The results indicated the organizational learning capability (mean = 3.27), organizational innovation (mean = 3.23), and knowledge inertia (mean = 2.20). Hypothesis testing revealed a significant impact of organizational learning capability on organizational innovation (β =0.85 and t-value=12.814) (Table 1).

Table 1 - Impact of Organizational Learning Capability on Organizational Innovation

Direct Path	β	t-value	Result
Organizational Learning Capability> Organizational Innovation	0.85	12.814	Accepted

Knowledge inertia was found to have a negative moderating role in the relationship between organizational learning capability and organizational innovation (β =-0.207 and t-value=-2.168). Therefore, when the knowledge inertia variable is considered, the adjusted coefficient of determination becomes 0.64 (Table 2).

 Table 2. Moderating Role of Knowledge Inertia in the Relationship between

 Organizational Learning Capability and Organizational Innovation

Path	Moderator Effect				Reg. Model		Result
	В	Beta	Sig.	t- Value	R ²	^ R ²	
moderating role of knowledge inertia on the relationship between organizational learning capability and organizational innovation	-0.064	-0.207	0.001	-2.168	0.643	0.114	Accepted

The inclusion of the knowledge inertia variable resulted in a decrease from 85% (Table 6) to 64% in the explained variance of organizational innovation by organizational learning capability. With a $\Delta R2$ value of 0.114, it can be concluded that the impact of organizational learning capability on organizational innovation decreases after adding the knowledge inertia variable. Additionally, the beta coefficient for the moderator variable (knowledge inertia) is β =0.207, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, knowledge inertia plays a moderating role in the relationship between organizational learning capability and organizational innovation.

Conclusion: While the influence of organizational learning capability on organizational innovation was demonstrated, the presence of knowledge inertia as a barrier to adopting and applying knowledge diminishes this effect.

Value: Knowledge inertia acts as a negative hindrance to the practical implementation of organizational learning processes. Mitigating or eliminating its effects can enable organizations to leverage their knowledge assets towards innovation and value creation.

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