Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Justice and Employee Entrepreneurial Behavior: Mediating Role of Trust

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of organizational influences: organizational support, organizational justice on employee entrepreneurship with the mediating role of organizational trust. Data were collected from 263 respondents working in the manufacturing sector in Pakistan. The application of two steps SEM showed a positive effect of organizational support and organizational justice on employee entrepreneurial behavior. The influence of organizational support was fully mediated by organizational trust. All other paths were partially mediated. In end, conclusions and recommendations have been given.

Keywords: Employee Entrepreneurial Behavior, Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Justice, Trust

1. Introduction

Now a days, organizations are challenged with hyper competition (D'Aveni, 1994). The situation is further aggravated by volatile demands of customers and technological shifts (Ireland & Webb, 2009). In order to survive, organizations are finding ways to augment their innovative potential (Drejer, 2006). The organizations are focusing on strategic renewal (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990), international competition and innovativeness (Brazeal, 1996). In this process of strategic renewal, one of the many strategies which the mature organizations have adopted is to enhance entrepreneurial behavior of their employees (also called intrapreneurial behavior/corporate entrepreneurship) (Wakkee et al., 2010). The strategy of corporate entrepreneurship is also appealing because it has been related with the profitability as well (Zahra et al., 1999).

Employee entrepreneurial behavior is an emergent behavioral intention in which employees innovate and proactively hunt opportunities for their organization while parting with the customary ways (Antoncic & Zorn, 2004; Moriano et al., 2011). Entrepreneurial employees exhibit networking behavior, think out of the box, take charge and initiatives, champion ideas, and involve in risky endeavors. Such employees are the driving force behind the growth of an organization (Moriano et al., 2011). The entrepreneurial employees resemble with independent entrepreneurs in their characteristics (Pinchot III, 1985). They are motivated, innovative, overcome challenges, and learn continuously (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996).

More recently, deJong et al. (2015) have put forward a working definition of employee entrepreneurial behavior conceptualized in terms of innovative, proactive, and risk taking behaviors. This conceptualization is based on organizational behavior literature. "Innovative behavior encompasses initiation and intentional introduction of new and useful ideas, processes, products, or procedures" (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Proactive behavior is a self-initiated and a future-oriented behavior which aims to transform and improve the situation (Parker & Collins, 2010). Risk taking behavior involves jumping into unknown ventures. For an entrepreneurial employee, risk taking may bring damages to reputation, peer resistance, and loss of job (deJong et al., 2015; Rauch et al., 2009). Risk taking may also be defined as the inclination towards those situations which if successful result in rewards, and if fail result in negative consequences (Edú Valsania et al., 2014).

Over the last few years, some studies on employee entrepreneurial behavior have emerged. However, there is yet a lot to be added to our understanding of this organizational phenomenon (Marvel et al., 2007). Recently, transformational leadership has been found to influence employee entrepreneurial behavior (Moriano et al., 2011). Likewise, Edú Valsania et al. (2014) observed that authentic leader behavior also predicts entrepreneurial behavior of employees. Rigtering and Weitzel (2013) found that work context has positive influence on entrepreneurial behavior. In this respect, our research adds to the theory

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of employee entrepreneurial behavior by examining the influence of organizational justice and perceived organizational support on entrepreneurial behavior of employees. Furthermore, none of the earlier works investigate the mediating mechanism(s) between antecedent conditions and employee entrepreneurial behavior. Another contribution of this paper would be to examine the intermediating role of trust between organizational support, organizational justice and employee entrepreneurial behavior. Besides, all the reported studies hail from developed world context. Antoncic (2007) and Zampetakis et al. (2009) suggest that cross cultural evidence should also benefit the literature. Hence, this study has been conducted in the manufacturing sector of Pakistan.

2. Theory and Hypotheses

2.1 Organizational Justice and Employee Entrepreneurial Behaviour

Organizational justice refers to fair dealings, and fairness perception related with organizational decisions and processes through which decisions are made (Colquitt, 2001). There are two aspects of organizational justice. Justice is distributive when the outcomes coincide with the allocation norms such as equality and equity. Justice is procedural, when the processes leading to decisions are just (Colquitt, 2001). Organizational justice has been found to influence organizational citizenship, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Colquitt et al., 2001).

There is minimal evidence till date which relates organizational justice and employee entrepreneurial orientation. However, we may develop on different streams of literature to base our arguments. Theories of justice propose that if an organization is perceived fair, employees are more like to spare their energies for the improvement of their organization (Moon et al., 2008). Tyler and Lind (1992) argue that just treatment signals to employees that they are being valued.

As the oldest form of justice, distributive justice denotes the decision outcome fairness (Adams, 1965). If outcomes are fair, it is an indication that the organization values the abilities and contributions of employees. When an organization values its employees, they are inclined to adopt behaviors which help their organization thrive (Moon et al., 2008). This happens as a consequence of social exchange (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Therefore, based on distributive justice perceptions, fair rewards and recognitions would lead employees to engage in entrepreneurial activities so that their organization may thrive. This aligns with the interpretation of Mumford and Gustafson (1988) that innovative systems are strongly encouraged by recognitions and rewards.

We can also theorize the influence of procedural justice on entrepreneurial behavior. Procedural justice denotes the fairness perception in the procedures of making decisions. This perception is based on whether one has a say in decision making procedure, (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), and whether the process was "consistent, ethical, free of bias, accurate, correctable" (Leventhal, 1980). If employees have a say in decisions, it indicates that organization is concerned about their ideas. Likewise, if the procedures are perceived to similar, ethical, and appropriate for all the employees, they are perceived to be focused for employee welfare (Lind et al., 1993). Perceived fairness regarding procedures and policies builds trust among employee (Holtz & Harold, 2009). Employees having trust in their organization feel safe while they volunteer to take on challenging task for their organization (Moon et al., 2008). Employee entrepreneurial activities are also challenging activities. In order to undertake these activities, employees need to gain trust from their organization which is only developed through fair organizational procedures (Dutta, 2013). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Organizational justice (procedural justice, and distributive justice) will have positive influence on entrepreneurial behavior of employees.

2.2 Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Entrepreneurial Behaviour

It is defined as "the extent to which employees perceive that their contributions are valued by their organization and that the firm cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger, Huntington, et al., 1986). When an organization takes care of its employees, they in turn develop positive opinions for the organization (Rhoades et al., 2001). Theory of social exchange and the norm of reciprocity dictate that employee's positive beliefs about their organization obligates them to care for the well-being of their organization and contribute towards organizational goals. A number of favorable outcomes of organizational support have

been reported in literature, for instance, increased satisfaction, lower turnover intentions, increased commitment with the organization, and organizational identification (Edwards & Peccei, 2010; Riggle et al., 2009). More specifically, longitudinal evidence also supports that perceived organizational support inspires employees to engage in extra-role performance (Chen et al., 2009). Since employee entrepreneurial behavior has also been described as an extra-role performance, hence, we can confidently ground our argument on the propositions of theory of perceived organizational support.

Zampetakis et al. (2009) inform that the theory of perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) may help us predict the entrepreneurial behavior of employees in organizations. Support from management is one of the organizational level antecedents which influence entrepreneurial actions of employees (Kuratko et al., 2005). Support may also be described as the inclination of management to endorse and encourage the entrepreneurship related activities of employees. Such an encouraging support influences employees to take on entrepreneurial endeavors (Hornsby et al., 2002). Top management may support by encouraging innovative ideas, providing resources, expertise, or discretion to materialize those ideas (Kuratko et al., 2005). However, Zampetakis et al. (2009) note that earlier studies have been focused only to delineate the perception of employees of the activities of management and have ignored the personification of management support as support from the organization. POS theory provides that the treatment which employees receive from the organizational representatives inspires them develop "global perceptions concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger, Huntington, et al., 1986).

Rhoades et al. (2001) showed that employee who perceive higher levels of organizational support are highly committed and satisfied, and may go "beyond" what has been formally described for them (George & Brief, 1992). Armeli et al. (1998) observed greater work effort by such employees. The support perception also results favorably for the organization through reciprocation (Rhoades et al., 2001). According to Zampetakis et al. (2009), as a consequence of organizational support, employees may be expected to repay both attitudinally and behaviorally. Hence:

H2: Perceived organizational support will have positive influence on entrepreneurial behavior of employees.

2.3 Mediating Role of Organizational Trust

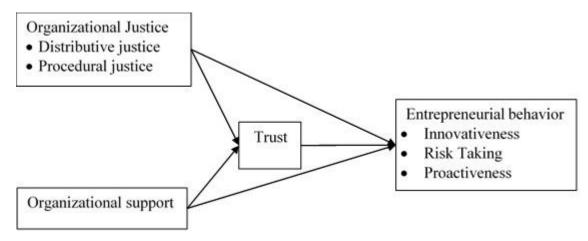
Trust may be defined as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer et al., 1995). Vulnerability denotes that trusting party may lose something (Stull & Aram, 2010), yet is taking the risk. However, trust is taking the risk willingly (Mayer et al., 1995). Trust is an imperative interpersonal transaction, for instance, employees often perform their work on the trust of their supervisors (Bhattacharya et al., 1998). In an organizational setting, trust has two elements of vertical and lateral trust (McCauley & Kuhnert, 1992). Vertical trust occurs when employees trust in their supervisor, or when it occurs hierarchically upward in an organization. Lateral trust denotes trust between employees in a horizontal manner (Stull & Aram, 2010).

In entrepreneurial activities, employees face uncertainty. They take the initiatives endorsed by their employer. According to Lester and Brower (2003), employees'/subordinates' attitudes and behaviors are influences by supervisor's/organization's trust in them, hence, those at a higher place in a relationship initiate trust in an organization (Creed & Miles, 1996). Pillutla et al. (2003) observe that trust and reciprocity are related cyclically, both increase with the passage of time. In case trust is unreciprocated, the relationship weakens. Stull and Aram (2010) argue that for employee entrepreneurial activities, trust is a major contributory factor. When employees are trusted upon, they reciprocate with their extra-roles.

Now, we discuss the role of perceived organizational justice and support in developing trust among employees. DeConinck (2010) find that perceived organizational support and justice develop trust in employees. Trust mediates the effect of different antecedents on work outcomes. The trust developed through perceived support and justice make employees believe that the actions which they will take will be endorsed by the organization. therefore, they comfortably involve in entrepreneurial behavior. Hence, we posit that:

- H3: Trust will mediate the effect of perceived organizational justice on employee entrepreneurial behavior.
- H4: Trust will mediate the effect of perceived organizational support on employee entrepreneurial behavior.

Figure No.1 Conceptual Framework



3. Research Design

3.1 Participants

Employees working in the manufacturing sector of Pakistan were the population for this study. In order to be eligible to become part of the sample, an individual had to be on the managerial hierarchy of his/her organization. The sample was drawn from the Gujranwala Division which is recognized as one of the major manufacturing hubs of Pakistan. The prominent industries are leather industry, fan industry, and steel products etc. Hence, a diverse sample was possible. The sample for this study was 263 respondents. Among the respondents, 53.4% were males, the rest were females. The mean age of respondents was 29 years. The mean experience of sampled respondents was 5.1 years. The mean time since an employee was working with the present organization was 3.4 years.

3.2 Measures

Entrepreneurial Behavior Entrepreneurial behavior was defined as an individual's exhibition of innovative, proactive, and risk-taking behavior at his/her workplace. Employee entrepreneurship was measured using the instrument developed by deJong et al. (2015).

Perceived Organizational Support was measured using the instrument developed by Eisenberger, Hungtington, et al. (1986). Short form questionnaire consisting of 8 items was used in this study.

Organizational Justice was measured by the instrument of Colquitt (2001). This instrument encompasses both the dimensions of procedural justice and distributive justice.

Trust was measured with the help of scale by Mayer and Gavin (2005).

Demographic Information A section for collecting the demographic information of respondents was also included in the questionnaire. The demographic information sought were related to gender (male, female), age (in years), experience (years), tenure with present organization (years) level of qualification, working unit, hierarchical position, and type of telecommunication company.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected both manually and electronically. Personal visits were paid to the respondents for the self-administration of questionnaires. Focal persons were also appointed for data collection, who also paid visits to potential respondents. Through various means, 600 questionnaires were distributed in hard form. The response rate was 40.5% with 203 filled questionnaires.

Electronically, the same questionnaire was disbursed using google forms also. To enhance the rate of response, the survey also made a request to the respondents to forward the same to other potential respondents. In this way, 300 questionnaires were distributed. The response rate was very low with only 60 returned questionnaires. The low response rate in case of electronic questionnaires may be attributed

to the reason that people regard the physical presence most as was in the case of personally administered questionnaires.

4. Data Analysis

We first computed descriptive statistics. For hypotheses testing, structural equations modeling was applied in two steps following Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, validity of measurement was established. Second, a structural regression was run to test hypotheses. Details follow.

4.1 Descriptive Results

The table below shows the descriptive results of quantitative analysis. All the correlations among were significant.

Table No.1 Descriptive Results

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mean	3.41	3.75	3.93	3.21	3.61	3.30
SD	1.630	1.501	1.210	1.721	.981	.890
Entrepreneurial Behaviour	1					
2. Trust	.436	1				
3. Organizational support	.399	.373	1			
4. Organizational justice	.465	.401	.531	1		
5. Distributive justice	.321	.432	.507	.473	1	
6. Procedural justice	.374	.358	.451	.429	.553	1

Note: Correlations were significant at ***p<.000

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Since all the measures were adopted measures, the confirmatory factor analysis was a proper technique to evaluate the measurement model for psychometric properties, AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) was used for the purpose.

4.2.1 Measurement Model Fit

The hypothesized model had five latent variables. Employee entrepreneurship was a second order model with innovativeness, risk taking, and proactiveness as its dimensions. Organizational trust, affective commitment, and organizational support were first order constructs. We also loaded the distributive justice and procedure justice as first order constructs despite as the factor of organizational justice. The model was run in AMOS. We used the fit criterion given by Hu and Bentler (1999). We assessed the model for absolute measure of fit (CMIN/df, RMSEA), incremental fit (CFI, TLI), and parsimony fit (AGFI). The hypothesized model presented a good fit where all fit indices were in the range of threshold (CMIN/df=1.560, AGFI=0.901, TLI=0.905, RMSEA=0.038). Shah and Goldstein (2006) opine that in structural equations modelling, alternative models should also be tested. This is necessary to find if any alternative explanations exist against the presumed. Testing alternative models also helps to check the validity of hypothesized model. In the present case, an alternative model was also tested in which employee entrepreneurial behavior was a first order construct and organizational justice was a second order construct with distributive justice and procedural justice as factors. The alternative model was not a good fit. Hence, the hypothesized model was retained.

Table No. 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit

Fit-indices			Criteria
	Hypothesized Model	Alternative Model	
CMIN/df	1.573	1.741	CMIN/df<3
AGFI	0.959	0.874	AGFI>.90
CFI	0.942	0.852	CFI>.90
TLI	0.911	0.836	TLI>.90
RMSEA	0.026	0.083	RMSEA<.08

CMIN/df = Normed Chi-Square, AGFI=Adjusted Goodness of Fit index, CFI = Comparative Fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index, RMSEA = Root Mean Square of Error Approximation

4.2.2 Reliability and Validity

For measure of reliability, procedure recommended by Hair et al. (2010) was followed. The values of composite reliability for all constructs were above 0.7, which indicates that all measures established construct reliability (Hair et al., 2010).

Validity, convergent and discriminant were also established. AVE (Average Variance Extracted) was computed as measure of convergent validity. As per standard, a construct should have AVE>=0.50 in order to establish convergent validity. All constructs had convergent validity. Maximum shared variance and average shared variance were computed for discriminant validity. Both, MSV and ASV, should fall below AVE for a construct to be distinct from other constructs. MSV is a measure of maximum shared variance and is calculated by taking a square of maximum correlation of given construct. ASV refers to average shared variance and is calculated by taking a mean of squared correlations of a given construct with all other construct (Hair et al., 2010). The values show that all construct had discriminant validity.

Table No. 3: Reliability and Validity Measures

Constructs	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV
Entrepreneurial Behavior	.89	.58	0.216	0.166
Organizational Trust	.91	.67	0.263	0.210
Organizational Support	.88	.76	0.282	0.217
Distributive Justice	.93	.59	0.282	0.215
Procedural Justice	.90	.57	0.257	0.204

CR=Composite Reliability, AVE=Average Variance Extracted=AVE, MSV=Maximum Shared Variance, ASV=Average Shared Variance. Cut off: CR>0.7; AVE>.50; AVE>MSV; AVE>ASV,

4.3 Common Method Variance

All the measures were self-reports. A potential threat to self-reports is the presence of method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Common latent factor method was used to evaluate the method bias. To the hypothesized model, a single latent factor was added and all the observed variables were also loaded to that variable. None of the loadings had difference greater than .20 on its parents construct and latent factor. Hence, there were no indications of method bias.

4.3.1 Structural Model Testing

Hypotheses were tested in structural model.

4.3.2 Model Fit

The model fit was achieved in the first run (CMIN/df=2.821, AGFI=0.987, CFI=0.961, TLI=0.943, RMSEA=0.031)

4.3.3 Main Effect Hypotheses Testing

The regression results for main effects have been presented below. Perceived organizational support had a significant positive effect on employee entrepreneurship (β =.213, p<.001). Distributive justice was a positive predictor of employee entrepreneurship (β =.274, p<.001). Similarly, procedural justice was also a positive and significant predictor of employee entrepreneurship (β =.195, p=.001). Together all the variables explained a variance of above 30% percent (R²=.302) in the model.

Table No. 4 Results of Main Model

Paths	Standardized Beta	Standard Error	R ²	Accept/Reject
OS→EE	.213***	.078	.302	Accepted
DJ→EE	.274***	.098		Accepted
PJ→EE	.195**	.112		Accepted

^{***}p<.001, **p<.01

4.4 Mediation Model

For the testing of mediation effect, various approaches have been suggested in literature, this study employs bootstrapping method. Bootstrapping is a non-parametric re sampling method which is effective for significance testing of indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The test of mediation was performed in AMOS. The results have been given below.

4.4.1 Mediation Model Fit

In order to test mediation, both mediators were entered into equation simultaneously. The mediation model also showed an appropriate fit (CMIN/df=1.701, AGFI=0.983, CFI=0.953, TLI=0.932, RMSEA=0.030).

4.4.2 Mediation Hypotheses Testing

Mediation was performed using 5,000 bootstrap samples. The results with trust as mediator have been presented first, and with affective commitment later.

Organizational trust fully mediates the influence of organizational support on employee entrepreneurship. A 5000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence interval provided that standardized total effects (β =0.176, p=0.015) and standardized indirect effects (β =0.089, p=0.009) were significant and were statistically different from zero. However, the standardized direct effect (β =0.127, p=0.064) did not remain significant while mediator was in the equations. It concludes that the mediation observed was full mediation.

The effect of distributive justice on employee entrepreneurship was partially intermediated by trust. The effects including total effect (β =0.207, p=0.006), direct effect (β =0.141, p=0.018), and indirect effects (β =0.066, p=0.003) were all significant and statistically different from zero. The introduction of mediator did not influence the significance of direct path. The mediation was performed using 5000 bootstrap samples and bias-corrected 95% confidence interval. We conclude that mediation observed was partial.

Similarly, the mediating role of trust was also tested between procedural justice and employee entrepreneurship. The standardized total effect (β =0.164, p=0.006), direct effect (β =0.103, p=0.009), and indirect effect (β =0.061, p=0.002) were statistically different from zero and significant. These results were obtained using 5000 bootstrap samples with 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. Because the mediator did not affect the significance of direct effect, hence, the mediating effect was partial.

Table No. 5 Results of Mediation Analysis

		Employee Entrepreneurship					
Variables and Effect		SE	BC 95 % CI				
	Point of estimate		Lower	Upper	p-value	Mediation observed	
Mediator: Organizational trus	<u>st</u>		•				
Organizational Support							
Total Effect	0.176	0.065	0.127	0.379	0.015	Full	
Direct Effect	0.127	0.063	0.033	0.302	0.064		
Indirect Effect	0.089	0.025	0.045	0.148	0.009		
Distributive Justice							
Total Effect	0.207	0.064	0.025	0.300	0.006	Partial	
Direct Effect	0.141	0.058	0.073	0.320	0.018		
Indirect Effect	0.066	0.035	0.103	0.281	0.003		
Procedural Justice							
Total Effect	0.164	0.064	0.025	0.300	0.006	Partial	
Direct Effect	0.103	0.031	0.043	0.265	0.009		
Indirect Effect	0.061	0.027	0.087	0.315	0.002		

BC=Bias Corrected, CI= Confidence Interval

5. Discussion

The first objective was to find the influence of POS on employee entrepreneurship. The results were in support of our hypotheses. The organizational support is effective in turning ordinary employees into entrepreneurs. This also goes with earlier findings (Zampetakis et al., 2009). Why an organizational support should influence the employees is because it shapes employees' perception. If the organization does positive things for employees, employees in turn will develop positive perceptions about their organization. The positive feelings developed among employee will urge them not only to just adopt positive work attitude (Zampetakis et al., 2009) but will also cross the roles just described for them. The reciprocity

norm also gives explanation of this phenomenon (Gouldner, 1960). When asked, employees were of the opinion that they want to innovate and take risks for their organization. The same was confirmed through analysis where organizational support was a stronger predictor of entrepreneurial intentions among employees. It should also be noted that entrepreneurial behavior is not necessarily related to disruptive behavior but may include autonomous, independent, and integrative behavior.

The second objective was to study the influence of organizational justice on employee entrepreneurship. Fair treatment of employees by the organization is a predictor of extra-role behaviors (Colquitt et al., 2001). Ramamoorthy et al. (2005) found that organizational justice is an antecedent of innovative behavior. We hypothesized that distributive justice and procedural justice will have positive influence on employee entrepreneurship. The results provided that distributive justice is a positive predictor of employee entrepreneurship. When organization rewards employees, employees will perform better. It becomes even more important when the rewards are fairly distributed (Dutta, 2013). Hence, the rewards based on justice are important to imbue employee entrepreneurship. Similarly, procedural justice was a significant predictor. The results show the importance of organizational procedure and policies for the organization. If the policies are fair and are implemented with equity and equality, the employees will think out of the box. Out of box thinking will be related with their positive behavior at workplace.

The third objective was to uncover the intermediating effect of organizational trust. Trust proved as a mediator in the relationship between both antecedent factor and entrepreneurial behavior. The repeated instances of organizational support and organizational justice are influential in developing trust among employees. Theory of social exchange (Blau, 1964) provides that the recipients of favor always try to repay with if not more but at least with equal level. The employee in our case repaid with their beneficial behavior for the organization. Hence, we argue that organizational trust mediates the hypothesized links. This is also consistent with earlier studies (Stull & Aram, 2010).

6. Conclusions

This study has implications for literature, policy, practice. First of all, to the authors' knowledge, this is the first study which relates the organizational support and organizational justice with employee entrepreneurial behavior through organizational trust. This adds further to our understanding of the theory of employee entrepreneurship on one side. On the other hand, this paper contributes to the literature on trust. The discovery of mediating role of organizational trust has added to the realm of mediating roles of this construct. For policy, the organizations can draw guidelines from these findings. At the organizational level, the policies should be supportive for employee. Special consideration must be given to distribute rewards on fair basis. Mechanisms should be developed which urge employees to perform extra roles. For practice, the manager can take guidance from the findings of this study. They should treat all employees equally. In the present circumstances, the cost of doing business has increased manifolds. The survival is possible only when an organization utilizes its resource to the optimum and introduces innovative products and services in the market. Entrepreneurial employees are those who take risks on behalf of their organization and introduce innovations. It is important for the managers to adopt those practices which turn employees into entrepreneurs in such circumstances.

There are some suggestions for future researchers also. The design of this study limits the establishment of causality. The future researchers should adopt longitudinal design so that conclusion about causality may be established. This research has focused on the antecedent side of entrepreneurial behavior. Future studies should focus on the consequent side of entrepreneurial behavior.

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