

# THE MODEL CONSTRUCTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF DIFFERENTIAL LEADERSHIP STYLE ON TEAM INNOVATION ABILITY: BASED ON THE MEDIATING TEAM RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

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## Abstract

*Innovation, as a key element for the perpetual competitiveness and vitality of an enterprise, is increasingly receiving widespread attention from both the theoretical and practical communities. However, in reality there are often many employees who have creative thinking and expertise, but they are not fully recognized and respected by their work teams, resulting in the inability of employees to initiate innovation. In the Chinese cultural context, differential treatment by leaders is common and plays a unique role in corporate management practices. Differential leadership is attracting more and more attention as a special leadership style, but there are relatively few empirical studies on the impact of differential leadership on employees' innovative behavior. This study is based on the characteristics of differential leadership style in Chinese management context, and investigates the motivation of employees' innovative behavior under differential leadership style. The study is mainly based on team relationship conflict as the mediator, and examines the mechanism of differential leadership style on employees' innovative behavior, and constructs a behavioral model of differential leadership style on employees' innovative behavior.*

**Keywords:** Differential Leadership, Team Innovation Behavior, Team Relationship Conflict Introduction.

## Introduction

In today's fast-changing and highly uncertain business environment, the teamwork model has become increasingly popular in organizations due to its advantages of faster responsiveness, more diverse perspectives, and higher flexibility (Zhang, Gang & Chen, 2017). In today's competitive world where change can happen at any time, innovative behavior as an important factor for organizations to be invincible has received widespread attention from academia and practice (Baer & Vadera, 2010). Teams develop as the main form of work in organizations, and how to improve the innovative behavior of employees and the individual innovative behavior of team members becomes an important issue for organizations to maintain competitive advantage (Leung & Wang, 2015). Team leaders have the most direct and effective influence on employee innovation behavior and employee innovation behavior during team interaction (Gao, Wang & Lei, 2013). However, it is Western leadership theories that are commonly focused on and widely applied worldwide; while relatively little localized leadership behavior research has been conducted in China. Differential leadership behavior varies across cultural contexts, and the existing research does not fully explain Chinese indigenous leadership behavior. Considering that the phenomenon of leaders treating their own people differently from outsiders is prevalent in Chinese organizational management contexts (Zheng, 1995). Therefore, this study will examine the effect of differential leadership,

a local Chinese leadership behavior, on employees' innovative behavior in a Chinese management context.

### **Literature Review and Research Design**

In order to further investigate the mechanism of differential leadership style on employees' innovative behavior, the study has made an in-depth discussion on the literature related to the inner mechanism of differential leadership on employees' innovative behavior and explored the influence of team relationship conflict on employees' innovative behavior.

### **The Relationship between Differential Leadership and Employee Innovation Behavior**

Differential leadership is reflected by the fact that in a humanistic atmosphere, Chinese leaders have inconsistent leadership styles for different subordinates and give excessive favoritism to their more favored subordinates (Zhang, 1995), and Lin, Zheng & Zhou (2017) suggested that favoritism includes three aspects of communication and care, promotion and reward, and mistake leniency. In a humanistic atmosphere, leaders can lead to subordinates' dependence on their own resources on the one hand, and enable subordinates to accept personal relationships or personal preferences on decisions on the other hand, making partiality an acceptable and reasonable behavior.

The innovative behavior of employees is a combination of a series of discontinuous activities such as the generation, promotion and practice of their innovative ideas, which can be considered not only as the idea itself, but also as a series of behavioral processes by which individuals promote and practice such ideas at work and finally transform them into innovative outcomes (William et al., 2020).

Differential leadership styles are prevalent in corporate teams in Chinese contexts, which mean that leaders adopt different management styles depending on the members. Differential leadership theory is more in line with the Chinese perception of traditional culture than other Western leadership theories, and therefore has a more local fit. In order to achieve efficient team functioning, leaders establish different levels of relationships with the members of their teams and give more care, tolerance, and rewards to their favored subordinates. Zheng (1996) points out that differential leadership classifies team members into insiders and outsiders based on the classification criteria of "affinity, loyalty, and talent," and that this classification is not static and is dynamically adjusted with the performance of team members. Dare to have bold attempts in their work.

Related studies also point out that such differential leadership in Chinese companies tends to be more acceptable to team members, who believe that the partiality shown by team leaders is justified and thus can accept the existence of such differential treatment in the team, and team members try to make themselves in the circle by improving their work style and innovative work behaviors to attract the attention of the leaders. Therefore, this paper infers that differential leadership, as a motivational leadership style, can significantly promote employees to engage in creative work. Thus, it can be seen that the differential leadership style has some adaptability in the Chinese context; on the one hand, the insider subordinates will work harder and give full play to their work motivation and creativity in order to be grateful for their leaders' favoritism; on the other hand, the outsider subordinates will work harder and keep promoting innovative work to create greater benefits in order to get better development, and thus have the opportunity to be transformed into insiders. On the other hand, in order to develop better, subordinates from outside the circle will work harder, keep pushing forward innovative work, create more profit, and thus have the opportunity to transform into insiders. The differential leadership style plays a good motivational role both for insider

subordinates and outsider subordinates. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed in this paper.

*H1 differential leadership has a positive effect on employees' innovative behavior.*

*H1-1: Communication care has a positive effect on employee innovative behavior.*

*H1-2: Promotional rewards have a positive effect on employee innovative behavior.*

*H1-3: Mistake leniency has a positive effect on employee innovative behavior.*

## **Relationship between Differential Leadership and Team Relationship Conflict**

The team leader differentiates in decision-making participation, tolerance and trust, and promotion rewards in differential leadership behavior, and adopts separate management models for core and peripheral members. According to the role theory, as role recipients in the power structure, core members will intensify the development of mutually beneficial relationships with the leader in order to meet the role expectations of the leader and consolidate their advantages. The role change from outsider to insider will be achieved. For knowledge teams, members' willingness to pursue self-worth realization and satisfy intrinsic needs is stronger, and the dynamic nature of this relationship pattern and the permeability of leadership relationship boundaries act as implicit incentives for both insiders and outsiders to motivate members to realize their role values. This is manifested in the task process by team members' unique perspectives for the achievement of team task goals, methods of decision implementation, and work task-related activities, which in turn lead to relational conflicts. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed. H2 differential leadership has a positive effect on team relationship conflict.

*H2: The positive effect of differential leadership on team relationship conflict.*

*H2-1: Communication care has a positive effect on team relationship conflict.*

*H2-2: Promotional rewards have a positive effect on team relationship conflict.*

*H2-3: Mistake leniency has a positive effect on team relationship conflict.*

## **The Relationship between Team Relationship Conflict and Employees' Innovative Behavior**

For team members, the motivation for their task activities is not only to obtain material satisfaction, but more importantly, to obtain spiritual satisfaction such as respect and recognition through creative efforts. Compared with general team members, knowledge workers have higher self-esteem needs and are more sensitive to the atmosphere of fairness in the team. The leader's selfish behavior toward insiders in resource allocation, management behavior and emotion will make insiders get more resources and information, while outsiders get less respect, trust and development opportunities, which will generate unfair feelings, deepen the degree of differentiation of role perception among members, bring resistance from outsiders, and then lead to relationship conflicts.

Team relationship conflict occurs commonly in team operations. Cheng, et al. (2018) suggested that conflicts such as task, relationship and procedure, team relationship conflicts have hidden characteristics. Emotional conflicts may exist when members focus on them as well as the need for status. This indicates that there is a need for status with contention in the team and can lead to other conflicts in the team. Thus, team relationship conflict is a fundamental factor of team conflict, so this study examines team relationship conflict as a major mediator of employees' innovative behavior.

Corinne Bendersky, et al. (2020) show that when there is a status disagreement, there is a process of more team relationship conflict, which once emerged from the destructive state later, enables the team to get a more pronounced representation in innovation at work. Employees who experience team relationship conflict are more likely to internalize

organizational goals into personal goals, when the competitive relationship between members allows the entire team to share a common vision and employees collectively have a better understanding of organizational goals, which makes the work atmosphere more conducive to the improvement of employees' innovative behavior. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

*H3: Team relationship conflict is positively related to employees' innovative behavior*

### **Moderating Role of Team Innovation Climate**

Situational power is an important factor in the process of influencing employees' cognition to their specific behaviors, and an important way to explore the interaction between individual factors and situational factors. The innovation climate reflects employees' perception of the innovation environment in the work team, including the innovation resource support and innovation policy support provided by the team. These innovation factors will have a certain influence on the cognition, emotion and behavior of team members, and have a very important role in promoting individual creativity and team creativity. According to the contextual power theory, the contextual power of the team in which an individual is working will provide important external signals about the appropriateness of specific individual behaviors, and the strong context it creates has a positive contribution to the process of transforming individual cognitive and emotional psychological factors into specific work-producing behaviors.

Team innovation climate is a reflection of team members' shared perceptions about innovation in the work environment, and it can significantly influence individual innovation attitudes and behavioral performance. Research has shown that an innovative climate in a team can facilitate communication among team members about creative activities, improve team members' understanding of innovation, and tolerate individual innovation failures. If a team is in a high level of innovation climate, it means that team members have more resources such as working freedom, flexibility and empowerment in innovation work, and team members will see innovation as their job mission when they are aware of the cues provided in the work environment to encourage innovation, i.e., team members will consider innovation as part of their job, proactively participate in some activities outside their role, and show more innovative behaviors in their behavior. This means that team members will see innovation as part of their job, proactively engage in some activities outside their role, and show more innovative behaviors. This implies that after the strong contextual influence of a high level of innovation climate, team members with high perception of insider status will be more active in some activities outside their job role and engage in more innovative work, therefore, we propose the following hypothesis.

*H4 Team innovation climate has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between differential leadership and employee innovation behavior.*

*H4-1 Team innovation climate positively moderates the relationship between communication care and employee innovation behavior.*

*H4-2 Team innovation climate positively moderates the relationship between promotion rewards and employee innovation behavior.*

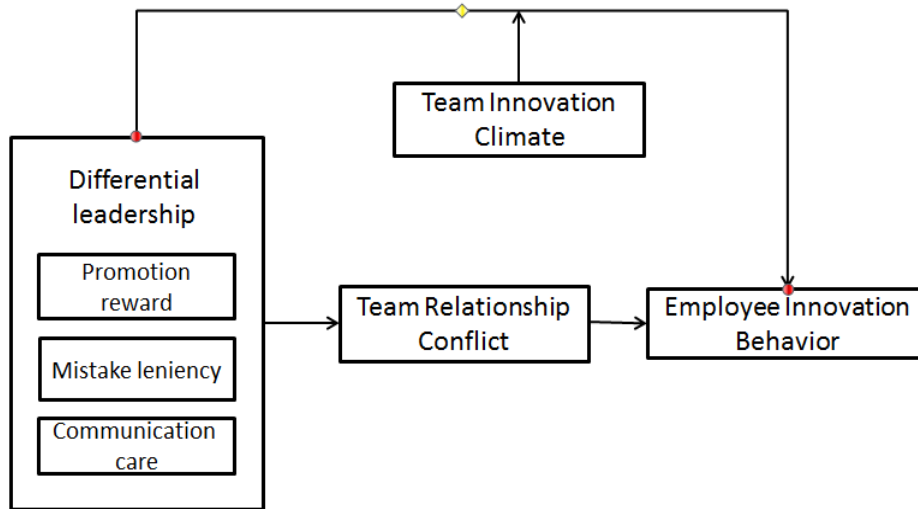
*H4-3 Team innovation climate positively moderates the relationship between mistakes leniency and employees' innovative behavior.*

### **Construction of Relationship Model**

#### **Research Model**

Based on the above research basis, this study proposes a model of the influence mechanism of differential leadership style on employees' innovative behavior: where the

independent variable is differential leadership, the dependent variable is employees' innovative behavior, and the mediating variable is team relationship conflict. In which the team innovation climate toward is the moderating variable, as shown in Figure 3.1



**FIGURE 1  
RESEARCH MODEL**

**Research Design**

Based on the above hypothesis, the scale was developed. In terms of scale selection, this study intends to use the 7-scale scale which is very mature in sociological research to measure the user's attitude from 1 to 7 points. 1 means "totally disagree" and 7 means "totally agree". After considering the discrimination of the subjects and the expression effect of the scale, we decided to use the 7-scale scale to develop the scale. To ensure the reliability and validity of the scale, we adapted the scale based on the previous research.

Respondents' total score is the sum of their responses to each question, indicating their level of agreement with the statement, and in the questionnaire, four questions were guaranteed to be measured for each variable to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. Where differential leadership was measured using the self-statement scales of Jiang, et al. (2010), (Wang et al., 2018); team relationship conflict variables were measured using Jehn (1995); team innovative climate was measured using the scale (Song et al., 2019). The scale of employee innovative behavior was used (Cheng, 2018). The variables and their corresponding question items are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 MEASUREMENT OF DIFFERENTIAL LEADERSHIP RESEARCH		
Variable	Measurement items	Reference sources
Communication care	They showed more solicitude.	Jiang <i>et al.</i> (2010) Wang <i>et al.</i> (2018)
	Give a larger reward.	
	The punishment is lighter than other subordinates.	
	Spend more time on work guidance.	
	Offer and retain opportunities for promotion.	
Promotion Award	We will not pursue the mistakes made by some subordinates.	Jiang <i>et al.</i> (2010)

	<p>Contact and interaction are more frequent.</p> <p>Give more opportunities to get rewards.</p> <p>Pretend not to see the mistakes made by some subordinates.</p> <p>They are more willing to lend a helping hand to the difficulties they encounter.</p>	Wang et al. (2018)
Mistake leniency	<p>Assign more important and easy tasks.</p> <p>Less blame for the mistakes of some subordinates.</p> <p>The Standing Committee sent some subordinates to convey the message.</p> <p>Give faster promotion speed.</p>	<p>Jiang <i>et al.</i> (2010)</p> <p>Wang et al. (2018)</p>
Team Relationship Conflict	<p>There is friction between members of my team</p> <p>I am on a team where there are personality conflicts between members</p> <p>There is tension between members of my team</p> <p>I am on a team where there is emotional conflict between members</p>	Jehn(1995)
Team Innovation Climate	<p>Our team is committed to pursuing innovative approaches in our work.</p> <p>Our team is always available to support the development of innovative ideas.</p> <p>Our team is open and responds quickly to changes in the environment.</p> <p>Our team members are constantly looking for new ways to solve problems.</p> <p>Our team allows members to spend enough time on innovation.</p> <p>Our team members collaborate to drive the development and application of new ideas.</p> <p>Our team members provide shared resources for the application of innovative ideas.</p> <p>Our team members provide behavioral support for the development and application of new ideas.</p>	Jun Song <i>et al.</i> (2019)
Employee Innovation	<p>I often think about things from a different perspective.</p>	Cheng.(2018)

Behavior	I often take risks to support new ideas or creativity.
	I often look for opportunities to improve the working methods or processes of my team.
	I will often introduce colleagues to new ways of working or techniques.
	I will take seriously every opportunity to learn about and identify problems.
	I often test the effectiveness of new ways of working.
	I often suggest new ways of working to be implemented in the team.
	I often try to adopt new methods to solve problems that arise in the workplace.

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Sample Data and Collection

The questionnaire was distributed on the spot and online. To improve the validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire with a short filling time is manually filtered and deleted. Finally, 351 valid questionnaires were obtained for follow-up empirical research. There are 151 on-site questionnaires and 200 online questionnaires.

#### Sample Characteristics

The sample of this study is mainly mature large enterprises, followed by employees at all levels of small and medium-sized enterprises in entrepreneurial parks across the country. 400 questionnaires were distributed to 100 work teams in total, and after screening and removing invalid questionnaires, 351 valid questionnaires were finally obtained from 86 teams, with an effective rate of 87.8%.

The specific characteristics of the valid samples were analyzed as follows: among these subjects, male and female members accounted for 59.5% and 40.5% of the overall sample respectively, the largest number of employees aged between 25 and 30 years old, accounting for 33.9%, 84% of subjects aged 35 years old and below, 85.3% of subjects with bachelor's degree or above, and the largest number of enterprise size mainly in the case of 50-100 people The size of the company is mainly 50-100 employees, accounting for 39.9%, followed by teams of 500 or more employees, accounting for 27.6%.

#### Reliability Analysis of Scale Data

In this paper, Cronbach's coefficient was used to analyze the reliability of the questionnaire and to test the internal consistency among the items of the questionnaire. The larger the coefficient  $\alpha$ , the higher the reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 2.1 shows the Cronbach coefficients of each variable: the coefficients of care communication, promotion reward, tolerance for making mistakes, team relationship conflict, team innovation atmosphere, and employee innovation behavior are 0.896, 0.894, 0.885,

0.872, 0.925, and 0.928, respectively, which are all greater than 0.7 and higher than the critical value of 0.7, indicating that the reliability of the questionnaire is higher and each variable The scale is more reasonable, the reliability is better with better stability, and it passes the reliability test (Table 2.1).

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Cronbach <math>\alpha</math></b>
Communication care	5	0.896
Promotion reward	5	0.894
Mistake leniency	4	0.885
Team relationship conflict	4	0.872
Team Innovation Climate	8	0.925
Employee Innovation Behavior	8	0.928

**Validity Analysis of the Scale Data**

In terms of the validity analysis results, the KMO value was 0.937, which is greater than the criterion of 0.7, and the Bartlett's spherical test statistic was less than 0.001, making it suitable for factor analysis. Factor analysis was conducted using SPSS 23.0, and the rotated factor loadings and explained variances were as follows, and the matrix had seven common factors.

Factor 1, which corresponds to taking communication care, has an eigenvalue of 11.236 and a variance contribution of 33.047%; factor 2, which corresponds to rewarding promotion, has an eigenvalue of 4.243 and a variance contribution of 45.526%; factor 3, which corresponds to forgiving mistakes, has an eigenvalue of 2.637 and a variance contribution of 53.281%; factor 4, which corresponds to team relationship conflict, has an eigenvalue of 2.050. Factor 4 corresponds to team relationship conflict with an eigenvalue of 2.050 and a variance contribution rate of 59.309%; Factor 5 corresponds to team innovation climate with an eigenvalue of 1.946 and a variance contribution rate of 65.033%; Factor 6 corresponds to employee innovation behavior with an eigenvalue of 1.601 and a variance contribution rate of 69.743%. According to the results of the above questionnaire analysis, it can be seen that the variable design of the studied questionnaire has good reliability and validity, and further research can be carried out.

**Regression Analysis**

When there is a connection between things but no direct causal explanation can be made, such a relationship between things is called a correlation. In this paper, the relationship between the variables in this study is first analyzed through PERSON correlation (Table 2.2).

	<b>Communication care</b>	<b>Promotion Award</b>	<b>Mistake leniency</b>	<b>Team Relationship Conflict</b>	<b>Team Innovation Climate</b>	<b>Employee Innovation Behavior</b>
Communication	1					



care						
Promotion Award	0.303**	1				
Mistake leniency	0.180**	0.385**	1			
Team Relationship Conflict	0.364**	0.444**	0.338**	1		
Team Innovation Climate	0.491**	0.260**	0.108*	0.274**	1	
Employee Innovation Behavior	0.494**	0.500**	0.326**	0.389**	0.357**	1

The results of correlation analysis in the table above show that the P values of the correlation coefficients of the six latent variables involved in this paper are all less than 0.01, which has significant statistical significance, indicating that there is a significant positive correlation between the two of the six latent variables.

In the part of correlation analysis, it is proved that the variables in the hypothesis are significantly correlated. However, the correlation analysis between variables can only verify whether there is correlation between variables, but cannot show the causal relationship. Regression analysis also needs to further explore its influence direction and causality. Spss23.0 was used for linear regression analysis Table 2.3. The specific analysis is shown in the table below:

**Table 2.3**  
**REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES OF DIFFERENTIAL LEADERSHIP**

Variable	Employee Innovation Behavior	Team Relationship Conflict	Employee Innovation Behavior	Promotion Award*Employee Innovation Behavior	Mistake leniency*Employee Innovation Behavior	Communication care*Employee Innovation Behavior
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Promotion Award	0.368	0.24				
Mistake leniency	0.339	0.303				
Communication care	0.129	0.178				
Team Relationship Conflict			0.389			
Team Innovation Climate				0.104	0.102	0.133
R <sup>2</sup>	0.393	0.282	0.151	0.261	0.305	0.241
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.388	0.276	0.149	0.257	0.301	0.207
F	78.048	47.262	64.77	64.002	79.529	48.394

From model 1, we know that  $R^2$  is 0.393, adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.388, where  $F$  is 78.048, model significance  $p < 0.000$ , promotion reward ( $\beta = 0.368$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), tolerance for making mistakes ( $\beta = 0.1339$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), and communication care ( $\beta = 0.129$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) have a positive effect on employee innovation behavior the effects of H1-1, H1-2, and H1-3 hold. From model 2, we can know that  $R^2$  is 0.282, adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.276, where  $F$  is 47.262, model significance  $p < 0.000$ , promotion reward ( $\beta = 0.240$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), tolerance for making mistakes ( $\beta = 0.303$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), communication care ( $\beta = 0.178$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) have positive effect on team relationship conflict influence, H2-1, H2-2, and H2-3 hold. From model 3, it is known that  $R^2$  is 0.151, adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.149, where  $F$  is 64.77, model significance  $p < 0.000$ , team relationship conflict ( $\beta = 0.389$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) has a positive effect on employee innovation behavior, H3 holds. From model 4, it is known that  $R^2$  is 0.261, adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.257, where  $F$  is 64.002, model significance  $p < 0.000$ , and team innovation climate ( $\beta = 0.104$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), so it is proved that the moderating variable team innovation climate plays a positive and significant moderating role between care communication and employee innovation behavior, and H4-1 holds. From model 5, it is known that  $R^2$  is 0.305 and adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.301, where  $F$  is 79.529, model significance  $p < 0.000$ , and team innovation climate ( $\beta = 0.102$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), so it is proved that the moderating variable team innovation climate plays a positive and significant moderating role between promotion reward and employee innovation behavior, and H4-2 holds. From model 6, it is known that  $R^2$  is 0.241 and adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.207, where  $F$  is 48.394, model significance  $p < 0.000$  and team innovative climate ( $\beta = 0.133$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), so it is proved that the moderating variable team innovative climate plays a negative and significant moderating role between tolerance of making mistakes and employee innovative behavior, and H4-3 holds.

### Discussion

In addition, in practical work, in order to improve employees' innovative behavior through differential leadership, this paper puts forward the following three suggestions.

First, improve leadership effectiveness and avoid negative side. In the actual management process, differential leadership should first make it clear that favoritism to insiders and subordinates does not mean to be strict with outsiders, but to show better work expectations to outsiders and give due respect to all team members, so as to better motivate all team members to work hard.

Second, strengthen identity recognition. In the team organization, we should create a positive signal that is conducive to the formation of insiders' status and identity cognition. Leaders should take effective measures, such as providing help and support, authorization, etc., so that team members can feel more interaction and trust, stimulate employees' recognition of internal identity, so as to fully mobilize employees' initiative and enthusiasm, and make employees more willing to engage in some out of role work such as creative activities expected by team leaders.

Third, create an innovative atmosphere. Managers in the work team should try their best to create a good atmosphere for innovation, avoid a strong environment in which employees are afraid of their rights, and try every means to motivate and mobilize employees' subjective initiative through various ways and platforms.

### Research conclusions

Based on the theory of differential leadership, this paper puts forward the influencing factors of employees' innovation behavior in innovation team. Through the investigation and analysis, this paper finds out the relevant literature theory, and finds out the variables that affect employees' innovative behavior through promotion and reward, mistake leniency, care

and communication, team relationship conflict and other influencing factors in business order leadership, and discusses the relationship between these variables.

### **Differential Leadership Significantly and Positively Affects Employees' Innovative Behavior**

According to model 1 it can be seen that in the study on team's differential leadership in the promotion of rewards, tolerance for mistakes and communication care has an extremely significant effect on the innovative behavior of the team.

This is in line with previous scholars (Jiang, 2013; Wang et al., 2016) studies. In his findings, Jiang (2013) mentioned that promotion rewards, tolerance for making mistakes, and communication care in differential leadership are all influential factors of employees' innovative behavior. Promotional rewards and forgiveness of mistakes were shown to be the core factors that directly influence employees' innovative behavior in the original model. Jiang, et al. (2012) Promotion rewards, forgiveness of mistakes, and caretaking communication from the circle in differential leadership not only enhance team innovation, but also reduce the tendency of that team to leave.

### **Differential Leadership Significantly and Positively Affects Team Relationship Conflict**

According to model 2 it can be seen that in the study on teams differential leadership in the promotion of rewards, mistake leniency, and communication care has an extremely significant effect on team relationship conflict in teams. (Chen et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2009; Ward, 2020). Chen, et al., (2015) suggested that differential leadership showed positive correlations among men on team relationship conflict, team psychological safety and team creativity. Liu, et al., (2009) showed that during the study of team relationship conflict, promotion rewards, forgiveness of mistakes, and care communication stimulate team members' desire for status. Ward (2020) proposed that differential leadership has different positive effects in different status hierarchy relationships, and teams will strive for higher promotion rewards, forgiveness of mistakes, and other content, to strive for higher status relationships.

### **Team Relationship Conflict Significantly and Positively Affects Employee Innovation Behavior**

According to model 3 it can be seen that in the team study summary, as team relationship conflict increases for employee innovation behavior also appears to be positively influenced. This is in line with the findings of previous scholars (He, 2007; Shin et al., 2017). He (2007) In order to enhance employees' innovative behavior, there are various ways to prevent the deterioration of relational conflict, such as strengthening trust between team members, choosing appropriate conflict handling methods, and creating team learning goals, etc. Shin, S. J. et al. (2017) Different genders will appear different in team relational conflict, team psychological safety on team creativity impact, with males showing a more significant positive correlation before low conflict and team creativity.

### **Team Innovation Climate Plays a Positive and Significant Moderating Role Between Differential Leadership And Employee Innovation Behavior**

The results of the data analysis indicate that team innovation climate has a positive moderating effect in the relationship between differential leadership and team innovation: the higher the team innovation climate, the more pronounced the relationship between differential leadership and team innovation among employees. This is consistent with previous research

(Ngo et al., 1995), and Tierney, et al. (2004), who noted that employees with a low team innovation climate are more likely to view their relationships with their supervisors as equals, without much status or identity concerns. Thus, before the threshold of internal and external people in differential leadership, employees with high team innovation climate will engage in proactive behaviors, such as constructive behaviors and reasonable persuasion, more unconcerned than other employees, while after the threshold, employees with high team innovation climate care less about the supervisor individually and more about the team collectively, and therefore will try to restrain their own initiatives regardless of whether the supervisor needs to construct or reasonably Persuasion.

### Discussion

In addition, in practical work, in order to improve employees' innovative behavior through differential leadership, this paper puts forward the following three suggestions.

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Second, strengthen identity recognition. In the team organization, we should create a positive signal that is conducive to the formation of insiders' status and identity cognition. Leaders should take effective measures, such as providing help and support, authorization, etc., so that team members can feel more interaction and trust, stimulate employees' recognition of internal identity, so as to fully mobilize employees' initiative and enthusiasm, and make employees more willing to engage in some out of role work such as creative activities expected by team leaders.

Third, create an innovative atmosphere. Managers in the work team should try their best to create a good atmosphere for innovation, avoid a strong environment in which employees are afraid of their rights, and try every means to motivate and mobilize employees' subjective initiative through various ways and platforms.

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