

Article

Employee's Corporate Social Responsibility Perception and Sustained Innovative Behavior: Based on the Psychological Identity of Employees

Yi-Bin Li ¹, Gui-Qing Zhang ¹, Tung-Ju Wu ² and Chi-Lu Peng ^{3,*} 

¹ School of Business Administration, Huaqiao University, Quanzhou 362021, China; liyibin@hqu.edu.cn (Y.-B.L.); 17014120001@stu.hqu.edu.cn (G.-Q.Z.)

² School of Management, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150001, China; tjwu@hit.edu.cn

³ Business Intelligence School, National Kaohsiung University of Science and Technology, Kaohsiung 824303, Taiwan

* Correspondence: chilupeng@nkust.edu.tw

Received: 8 September 2020; Accepted: 15 October 2020; Published: 17 October 2020



Abstract: Corporate social responsibility refers to the voluntary promises made by an enterprise to achieve sustainable development. When enterprises conduct prosocial activities, they must consider the feelings of their employees including employees' sense of identification and well-being. However, most existing corporate social responsibility studies have focused on the financial performance of enterprises; the effects of corporate social responsibility on employees have seldom been examined. Accordingly, this study conducted an empirical study examining the effects of employee perception of enterprise corporate social responsibility, employee well-being, and organizational identification on employee innovative behavior. A total of 431 valid questionnaires were retrieved. A structural equation modeling analysis revealed that a positive relationship exists between employee perception of enterprise execution of corporate social responsibility and employee innovative behavior. Furthermore, both employee well-being and organizational identification play mediating roles between the two variables. When conducting social responsibility activities, enterprises are suggested to inform their employees or even encourage their participation in their efforts to fulfill their social responsibility. Through interaction between internal and external stakeholders, substantial innovative behavior, beneficial for the subsequent development of enterprises, can be stimulated.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility perception; employee well-being; organizational identification; innovative behavior

1. Introduction

With the diversification and enrichment of communication technologies, network information, and knowledge dissemination media, available information has been made more transparent and the operation and management of many enterprises less mysterious. Information related to enterprise operations and management is, thus, open to public scrutiny [1,2]. When an unexpected event occurs, does an enterprise stand with society against the negative influences of the event? The reaction of enterprises in these critical moments influence public impressions of them. Scandals and philanthropic acts of corporations have an even more profound influence on their image and consumer trust [2,3]. Therefore, the emphasis of the public on the ethics and morals of enterprises has been sharpened, and the public is beginning to contemplate the roles played by enterprises. Enterprises depend on consumers to generate profits; however, the negative consequences of enterprise actions are frequently borne equally by these consumers, the environment, and the public [2–4]. Is such an outcome fair and reasonable? Current events concern the survival of many industries, and they are critical to the

sustainable development of enterprises. Therefore, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is no longer merely a matter that society and the public follow with interest; it has become a manifestation of enterprises' own positioning, as well as their responsibilities toward every level of society [1,2,4,5]. Apart from profit generation, what other factors constitute critical factors in ensuring the sustainable development of enterprises? This is the question to be answered by enterprises in the 21st century. When proposing the future trends of enterprises, Drucker [6] mentioned that "the current century is an age of social charity" and "the new management fad should emphasize the incorporation of integrity and trust into practice." This indicates that the execution of social responsibility by enterprises has gradually become a crucial trend and critical factor in the development of enterprises.

CSR refers to voluntary promises made by an enterprise guided by sustainable development. Thus, other than their own financial and operational status, enterprises also need to consider the influence they have on society and the natural environment. Enterprises must also plan social activities that improve the quality of life of employees and their families, the local community, and society at large [7]. With the growing attention of industries and academia on CSR, scholars have urged the transformation of "CSR concepts that emphasize the fulfilling of duties and responsibilities" into "CSR strategic thinking that emphasizes proactiveness." Additionally, to gain an in-depth understanding of the influence of CSR on enterprises, the scope of examination should not be limited to financial indicators such as return on investment. The inclusion of nonfinancial indicators such as market share, brand positioning, corporate image, employee job satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the examination is necessary to gain an in-depth understanding of the influence of CSR on enterprises [8–10]. Enterprises should therefore take the initiative to plan and implement social responsibility measures targeting different stakeholders, such as employees.

Employees are the most important asset in a company [11–14]. With the entrenchment of economic globalization and the rapid development of science technologies, enterprises confront a highly competitive commercial environment. Many enterprises have realized that they must adjust and innovate constantly to cope with these changes, and organizational learning is a key means for employees to realize innovative behavior [11–14]. Enterprises gain a long-lasting competitive edge over their competitors only through rapid development and commercialization of new products, and this is possible only with persistent innovative behavior [14]. Additionally, enterprises are a type of organization that can be considered indispensable to the operation of society. Therefore, when carrying out economic activities, enterprises should also consider the influence of these activities on society and shoulder the corresponding social responsibility; accordingly, this is not only the demand of society on enterprises, but also a means for enterprises to lead by example. When employees are proud of the enterprise that they work for, they are more willing to contribute to the enterprise. Employees' autonomous innovative behavior can be increased by enhancing their sense of identification with and commitment toward the enterprise [13,15–17]. In recent years, the fulfillment of social responsibility by enterprises has been confirmed to enhance employees' sense of identification with the enterprise they work for [10,18,19]. However, whether the fulfillment of social responsibility by enterprises can lead to an increase in employee innovative behavior has yet to be confirmed. Therefore, the first motivation of the current study is to examine the relationship between CSR and employee innovative behavior.

Retaining talent and enhancing the senses of cohesiveness and identification with an enterprise have been long-standing problems in the realm of enterprise development. Retaining talent means the competitiveness of the enterprise is enhanced, leading in turn to the generation of better enterprise performance. Accordingly, many enterprises have started to pay attention to employee emotions and sense of well-being [20,21]. Additionally, most modern enterprises have adopted the goal of creating a happy enterprise. Creating a win–win situation by combining the cultivation of well-being with social responsibility fulfillment is a component that modern enterprises are working on [22]. For example, enterprises can invest resources into social charity activities or staff care and reexamine the core values of the enterprises. Subsequently, enterprises can generate employee perception of well-being and ultimately enhance job satisfaction [23]. Subtle measures, such as encouraging employees to participate

in enterprise social responsibility activities and paying attention to employees' work-related feelings, can also enhance employees' sense of cohesiveness and sense of identification with the enterprise [24]. Some enterprises have even asserted they should treat employees in the same manner they treat customers; the same level of importance should be attached to both because both play a critical role in the performance of the enterprises [21,24]. Most studies have focused on the influence of employee well-being and sense of identification on enterprise performance. However, they have not specified which aspect of enterprise performance the two variables affect. This study believes that employee willingness to contribute to the enterprise or even engage in innovative behavior is likely to increase with their sense of well-being and organizational identification. Furthermore, the critical factor in the generation of innovative behavior in employees is their sense of well-being. Therefore, the second motivation of the study is to examine how enterprises can make employees feel the significance of fulfilling social responsibility, which in turn generates a sense of well-being among employees and ultimately increases their innovative behavior.

2. Literature Review

2.1. CSR and Employee Innovative Behavior

When defined broadly, CSR refers to enterprises' voluntary use of their resources to contribute to society and their shouldering of responsibilities toward shareholders and all relevant stakeholders; this is done through the adoption of legal and economic responsibilities as the underlying basis, and laws, ethics, and morals as the underlying standards [8,10]. Bettencourt [25] argued that enterprises should attempt to improve the quality of life of employees and their family members, the local community, and the public through sustainable economic development and make this a promise from the enterprises to these parties in enterprise operation. With the maximizing of benefits and the minimizing of harm as the goal, enterprises should carefully evaluate the impact of their activities and operations on the environment, society, and the economy. Wu and Chen [26] maintained that CSR contains voluntary activities related to cause marketing, charity, and employees, as well as other innovative activities. Cause marketing has the effect of strengthening enterprise brands, which would in turn lead to the attraction of more potential customers or the strengthening of employees' sense of honor; enterprises could generate profits from this, even though cause marketing is regarded as a tool for relationship management [2,4,5]. CSR concepts have already been extended such that social responsibility is substantially incorporated into enterprise decision-making and project execution; this allows cooperation between enterprises and society, which in turns leads to mutually beneficial modes of collaboration [2–4].

Brunk [27] simplified the factors of CSR and divided them into five categories, namely customer responsibility, employee responsibility, environmental responsibility, economic responsibility, and community responsibility. Wu et al. [10] confirmed that fulfilling social responsibility can help enhance consumers' positive perception of enterprises, which would in turn lead to increased purchase intention among the consumers. Furthermore, most enterprises believe that the execution of social responsibility is an effort recognized by the public, and enterprises could use the shouldering of noneconomic factors of social responsibility to create a competitive edge for themselves; this includes creating a business reputation for themselves or enhancing proactive employee attitude and behavior [28]. If enterprises can shoulder their social responsibility, they might differentiate themselves from their competitors as well as establish a better image and reputation [9]. Zadek [29] argued that the CSR execution process is an organizational learning process. When an organization is fulfilling its social responsibility, it must coordinate relationships between different stakeholders. This would cause the organization to form a more open organizational culture, which would facilitate communication and interaction inside and outside the organization. Yadlapalli, Rahman, and Rogers [30] examined the relationship between suppliers' autonomous fulfilling of social responsibility and organizational learning from the perspective of a global supply chain and asserted that when organizations fulfill their

CSR, they possess people-oriented cultures, which exert a positive influence on organizational learning. Studies have also revealed that a close relationship exists between an enterprise's innovation capacity and its internal knowledge stock. Thus, without the support of relevant knowledge, enterprises face serious limitations in innovative behavior [4,28].

Additionally, to ensure development in the long run, enterprises set clear visions and strategic goals, and they may be more inclined to fulfill their social responsibility; this behavior would also facilitate knowledge sharing inside the enterprises [4,31]. The influence of CSR on enterprises is reflected in company culture, techniques, organizational structure, and member behavior; all these factors affect enterprises' operational performance and innovative behavior [32,33]. Majumdar and Marcus [34] stated that the autonomous fulfillment of CSR has a significant influence on the coordination and management style of organizations. Therefore, autonomous fulfillment of CSR can help enterprise managers develop better management skills. The management capacity of managers can be internalized through the enterprise's process of fulfilling social responsibility, which would lead to effective use of organizational resources and transformation of these resources into actual behavior that could enhance the operational performance of the enterprise [33]. Richter et al. [28] asserted that long-term investment behavior of enterprises guided by social responsibility could spark enterprises' motivation to engage in product innovation, development, and differentiation as well as entice employees to enact innovative behavior. In stakeholder theory, the execution of social responsibility can lead to the enhancement of enterprise reputation and improvement in relationships between the enterprise and various stakeholders, such as suppliers, customers, employees, or even government agencies. This would benefit the enterprise by increasing its internal and external social capital, facilitating the gathering of various operational resources (e.g., technical, capital, and talent) or even leading to the realization or enhancement of employee innovative behavior. Therefore, this study proposes H1 as follows: A significant and positive relationship exists between CSR and employee innovative behavior.

2.2. Mediating Roles of Employee Well-Being and Organizational Identification

Wu et al. [13] argued that well-being is a positive and proactive psychological state, and they regarded a sense of well-being as the intensity of life satisfaction, positive emotions, and negative emotions. Pignata et al. [24] agreed and proposed that work influences perception of life and well-being, and that one's sense of well-being is determined by one's level of satisfaction with work, life, and health. Existing research and measurements of sense of well-being have mostly used psychological feelings as their basis and developed concepts related to sense of well-being using the aspects of emotions and cognition. Lu [35] proposed one source of sense of well-being as being able to blend into groups in which an individual is accepted; through such blending and social activities, an individual can experience positive feelings such as identification, happiness, satisfaction, and sense of belonging. These feelings in turn lead to the generation of a sense of well-being. Sense of well-being is a sense of satisfaction that an individual can obtain under the condition of spiritual abundance, and morale is a critical factor [36]. This is because morale possesses the energy to make people engage in positive thinking, and positive thinking can transform negative emotions into positive ones, which can generate a sense of well-being through the enhancement of spiritual and life satisfaction. Therefore, positive thinking and kindly morale thinking are core sources of well-being.

Organizational identity refers to the feeling of having common goals or experiences with other members of an organization, being united, and being part of the organization. People with organizational identity also feel that members of the organization support each other and are loyal to one another. Organizational identity also refers to strong beliefs held by employees of an organization. Employees holding these beliefs accept the goals and values of the organization, are willing to contribute their efforts to the organization, and desire to become or remain part of the organization. From the perspective of organization management, Eisenberger et al. [17] asserted that organizational identity constitutes a type of benefit for enterprises because the sense of organizational identity would ensure that employees base their decision-making process on the interests of the organization. Even without the

supervision of managers, employees who identify with the organization form a new set of self-values similar to those of the organization, based on their impressions and perceived values of the organization. Mael and Ashforth [37] defined organizational identity as follows: When organizational members regard themselves as part of an organization, they identify with the mission, values, and goals of the organization and consider the interests of the organization in their management decision-making. Briefly, organizational identification refers to individuals' generation of emotional connection to the organization that they belong to. The individual sees herself as part of the organization and is willing to identify with its culture, values, and goals. The individual would appreciate the fact that they are a member of the organization and contribute loyally to the organization [38]. Organizational identity reflects employee understanding of self-concepts, their role positioning within the organization, and the organization as a whole. Additionally, in organizational identity formation, employees seek to define their self-identity in the organization through self-selected standards. Therefore, employee identity is refracted through the organization. Therefore, organizational identity is not only the type of perception that employees have of the organization they work in; it is also, for employees, a type of emotional bonding [38,39]. Employee work intention is crucial to the effectiveness of an organization, and employee willingness to serve the organization can be enhanced by improving employee identification with the organization; work intention can be transformed into effective actual behavior when employees are willing to work with all their hearts and souls for the sake of the organization.

Dirks and Ferrin [20] argued that employee perception of the modus operandi of an enterprise influences the employees' perception of the enterprise's trustworthiness. Kim et al. [21] posited that enterprises' execution of social responsibility activities can enhance their external reputation, and employee perception of an enterprise's external reputation can enhance their sense of identification with it. When employees have actually participated in or formed connections with the CSR activities of their company, their perception of the fulfillment of CSR by the company are enhanced. These results indicate that the more an enterprise fulfills its social responsibility, the more likely an employee is to possess a favorable impression of the CSR activities of the enterprise. Employees would believe that the enterprise has a moral sense and a conscience, and they would therefore generate positive expectations toward the enterprise. Not only that, the feeling of sharing in the enterprise's prestige also enhances employees' loyalty [40] and commitment [38,39]. Additionally, the results of Loon, Otaye-Ebede, and Stewart [41] revealed that both organizational identification and employee well-being are positively correlated to employee performance. These results indirectly indicate that enterprise fulfillment of social responsibility would lead to the establishment of an explicit positive image, and that such effort would also exert a positive influence on employee sense of well-being and identification. Therefore, this study believes that enterprise fulfillment of social responsibility not only enhances employees' sense of identification with the enterprise, but also that such efforts could lead to the increase of positive emotions in employees and, in turn, enhance employees' sense of well-being and further promote their sense of identification with the enterprise. If employees then engage in their work with a positive and proactive mentality, the productivity, creativity, and commitment aspects of their performance are enhanced. Therefore, this study posits H2: Employee well-being plays a mediating role between CSR and employee innovative behavior; and H3: Organizational identification mediates the effect of CSR on employee innovative behavior.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Participants

To gain an understanding of employees' feelings regarding the fulfillment of CSR by the enterprises that they work in, the researchers designed a questionnaire based on the theories described. The participants of the study consisted of employees of the top 500 enterprises in Taiwan. Taiwan's top 500 enterprises are selected as research bases is that these enterprises have relatively complete

CSR systems, and their firm size and reputation are relatively strong. Therefore, it is meaningful to choose employees in these enterprises as research target. Moreover, we contacted human resources managers of top 500 enterprises to inquire as to whether they were willing to take part in our study, and 49 enterprises agreed. The researchers sampled in the electronics, financial, food and beverage, and general services industries. We distributed 10 questionnaires to each enterprise that was willing to participate in this research, and randomly conducted surveys of their employees. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first included content related to the measurement of four study variables, namely CSR, work well-being, organizational identification, and employee innovative behavior. The second part contained items examining the demographic information of the respondents, including their gender, age, educational attainment, job tenure, and type of industry they worked in. The researchers distributed a total of 490 questionnaires, and 431 valid questionnaires were retrieved. The average age of the study sample was 33 years, and majority of the respondents were women ($n = 296$; 68.7%). With regard to educational attainment, most had an academic qualification of bachelor's degree or beyond ($n = 392$; 91%). The average job tenure of the participants was 8.4 years, and majority worked in the general services industry ($n = 225$; 52.2%).

3.2. Measurement

Corporate social responsibility: For CSR, the researchers referred to the definition proposed by Bettencourt [25]. Bettencourt argued that enterprises should attempt to improve the quality of life of employees and their family members, the local community, and the public through sustainable economic development and make this a promise of the enterprise to these parties through enterprise operations. For this construct, the researchers adopted the Corporate Ethics Scale proposed by Brunk [27] as the measurement tool, with 21 items in five dimensions, namely customer responsibilities, employee responsibilities, environmental responsibilities, economic responsibilities, and community responsibilities. Using the second-order single-factor model for the CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis, CFA), the overall fit indices ($\chi^2 = 244.39$, CFI (Comparative Fit Index) = 0.96, RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.05, NFI (Normed Fit Index) = 0.96, AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index) = 0.91, and GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) = 0.95 appeared better than when the first-order five-factor model was used ($\chi^2 = 1075.42$, CFI = 0.77, RMSEA = 0.09, NFI = 0.81, AGFI = 0.72, and GFI = 0.82). This section of the questionnaire had a Cronbach's α value of 0.93.

Employee well-being: For employee well-being, the researchers adopted the definition put forth by Wu et al. [13,14], who stated that well-being comprises satisfaction in one's work, life, and health; the higher an individual's satisfaction in these areas, the more intense the individual's sense of well-being. For this section of the questionnaire, the researchers used the Chinese Happiness Inventory developed by Lu [42]. This section of the questionnaire contained 10 items and had a Cronbach's α value of 0.91.

Organizational identification: Mael and Ashforth [37] suggested that organizational identification refers to an individual's generation of emotional connection to the organization that they belong to; the extent to which an individual sees herself as part of the organization and is willing to identify with the culture, values, and goals of the organization. If an individual appreciates that they are a member of the organization, they will contribute loyally to it. For this section of the questionnaire, the researchers used the Organization Identification Scale that Van Knippenberg and Sleebos [38] modified based on the original scale proposed by Mael and Ashforth [37]. This section contained six items and had a Cronbach's α value of 0.88.

Employee innovative behavior: Scott and Bruce [43] argued that employee innovative behavior refers to the worker behavior in which initiative is taken to provide new ideas, products, or processes to the enterprise to improve or enhance its performance [33]. For this section of the questionnaire, the researchers used the Organization Identification Scale proposed by Scott and Bruce [43]. The section contained six items and had a Cronbach's α value of 0.91. All the items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale. The measure details of this study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The instrumentals of this study.

Variable	Items	References
Corporate social responsibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can provide products and services that meet consumer needs. 2. Treat customers with ethics and integrity. 3. Think from the perspective of consumers. 4. Staff work efficiency is high. 5. Good service attitude. 6. I feel that employees love the company. 7. I feel the staff is full of energy. 8. I feel good working environment. 9. Reduce sales of over-packaged products. 10. Environmental protection production process. 11. Responsible for environmental protection. 12. Have environmental protection measures such as resource recycling. 13. Can promote industry development. 14. The marketing method is very attractive. 15. Often there is the development of innovative products. 16. Can enhance our country's economic activity. 17. Invest in public welfare activities. 18. Long-term donation of materials to impoverished areas. 19. Regular social education activities will be held to promote healthy eating concepts. 20. Sponsor activities related to arts and culture. 	Brunk [27]
Employee well-being	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I love my life. 2. I think life is very meaningful and purposeful. 3. My work always brings me a sense of success. 4. Everything that happened in life in the past was very pleasant. 5. I'm so happy. 6. I am satisfied with everything in life. 7. I feel I have infinite vitality. 8. The future is full of hope for me. 9. I am always happy and excited. 10. I can always understand the meaning of life. 	Wu et al. [13,14] Lu [42]
Organizational commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When someone criticizes your company, it feels like a personal insult. 2. I am very interested in what others think about your company. 3. When I talk about this company, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'. 4. This company's successes are my successes. 5. When someone praises this company, it feels like a personal compliment. 6. If a story in the media criticized the company, I would feel embarrassed. 	Mael and Ashforth [37] Van Knippenberg and Sleebos [38]
Employee innovative behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Searches for new technologies, processes, techniques, and/or product ideas. 2. Generates creative ideas. 3. Promotes and champions ideas to others. 4. Investigates and secures funds needed to implement new ideas. 5. Develops adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas. 6. Is innovative. 	Scott and Bruce [43]

4. Results

Common method variance is another important factor influencing the research model. The variance is tested using Harman's Single-Factor Test. An exploratory factor analysis through a principal components analysis has shown that the four factors selected explain 77.69% of the total variance; factor 1 explains 38.42% of the total variance, which is less than half of it. This proves that common method variance in this paper is well-controlled.

The Pearson's correlation coefficients for the study variables are presented in Table 2. All variables were significantly and positively correlated. Significant and positive relationships between CSR and all other variables were identified, and the directions of the relationships were consistent with the hypothesized directions. Additionally, all variables were significantly and positively correlated to employee innovative behavior; this result is consistent with results reported in relevant literature. To examine the mediating effects of other variables on employee well-being and organizational identification, the researchers employed the path analysis method of structural equation modeling (SEM).

Table 2. Results of correlation analyses.

	M	SD.	1	2	3	4
CSR	6.53	0.61	1			
Employee well-being	5.98	0.73	0.32 **	1		
Organizational identification	6.27	0.57	0.33 **	0.37 **	1	
Employee innovative behavior	6.34	0.48	0.28 **	0.39 **	0.37 **	1

n = 431; ** *p* < 0.01; CSR: Corporate social responsibility.

The final structure equation modeling (SEM) analysis revealed the following results: $\chi^2/DF = 1.58$, RMSEA = 0.05 (i.e., <0.08), GFI = 0.99, AGFI = 0.97, NFI = 0.97, and CFI = 0.98; all these values are larger than 0.95. PGFI = 0.6245, which is larger than 0.5. These values indicated that this model had good fit indices, which indicated that a good fit existed between the corrected model and the study sample. Furthermore, the construct reliability (CR) results yielded values greater than 0.7, showing that the underlying variables all have good internal consistency. The values of the average variance extracted (AVE) results are all greater than 0.5, which demonstrate that the average ability of the measurement indicators to explain the underlying variables is good. Therefore, it can be seen that the underlying variables have good construct reliability and validity. The path coefficients of the model reasonably and effectively reflect cause-and-effect relationships between the latent variables, and thus they can be used in examining the proposed hypotheses. Refer to Figure 1 for the operation results.

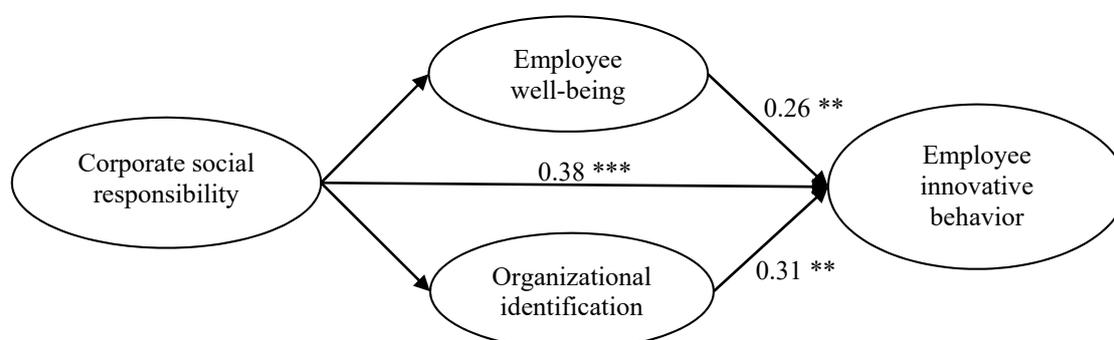


Figure 1. Path analysis. ***p* < 0.01; ****p* < 0.001.

As Figure 1 reveals, the standardized path coefficient between employee CSR perception and employee innovative behavior is 0.38, and the relationship is significant at the *p* < 0.01 level; employee CSR perception exerts a significant and positive influence on employee innovative behavior. Therefore, H1 is assumed to be empirically supported. Furthermore, the standardized path coefficient between

employee well-being and employee innovative behavior is 0.26; the relationship is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. This result indicates that employee well-being exerts a significant and positive influence on employee innovative behavior. The standardized path coefficient between employee organizational identification and employee innovative behavior is 0.31, and the relationship is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. This indicates that employee well-being exerts a significant and positive influence on the employee innovative behavior. The results also indicate that employee organizational identification exerts a significant and positive influence on employee innovative behavior.

Regarding the verification of H2 and H3, the researchers employed SEM to analyze the mediating effects of employee well-being and organizational identification. As described, CSR perception exerts a significant and positive influence on employee innovative behavior (the standardized path coefficient is 0.38 ***), and employee well-being also exerts a significant influence on employee innovative behavior (the standardized path coefficient is 0.26 **); this indicates that employee well-being exerts a significant partial mediating effect on the relationship between CSR perception and employee innovative behavior (the mediating effect is 0.29 **). Therefore, H2 is assumed to be empirically supported. Additionally, organizational identification also exerts a significant influence on employee innovative behavior (the standardized path coefficient is 0.31 **); this indicates that the employee's sense of identification with the organization exerts a significant partial mediating effect on the relationship between CSR perception and employee innovative behavior (the mediating effect is 0.25 **). Therefore, H3 is assumed to be empirically supported.

5. Discussion

This study examined whether employee perception of CSR affects their innovative behavior from the perspective of organizational learning and sharing. The roles of employee well-being and organizational identification as mediating variables were also examined. Empirical analysis of the data collected through questionnaires revealed that engagement in social responsibility by enterprises positively influence employee innovative behavior. Enterprises' executing social responsibility is beneficial for promoting employee creativity through the process of internal interaction, and it could also help enterprises facilitate their technical research and development and, ultimately, assist them in realizing their goals of fostering innovative behavior. Employee participation in CSR activities increases the employees' job satisfaction and improves their proactiveness in participating in the operation and management activities of enterprises. Ultimately, employee participation in CSR activities stimulates their ability to innovate and causes them to transform internal knowledge and apply this knowledge to other domains for the popularization, modification, and improvement of products and services. With regard to external stakeholders such as suppliers, consumers, and even government agencies, the fulfilling of social responsibility by the enterprise is beneficial for the establishment of external connections, which makes it easier for employees to obtain product- or service-related creative ideas from outside the enterprise, helping enhance the research and development of products and technologies.

Numerous studies have confirmed that when employees perceive that the enterprise they work in has fulfilled necessary CSR, they have a higher level of identification with and trust toward the enterprise. This leads to the generation of positive expectations and the enhancement of commitment to the enterprise. Our results indirectly indicate that the benefit of enterprise fulfillment of social responsibility is not limited to the establishment of explicit positive images—it also exerts a positive influence on employees' sense of well-being. If an enterprise can realize the integration of CSR and daily management, this integration may have a positive effect on job satisfaction. The results of the current study also indicate that enterprises' execution of social responsibility indirectly increase employee identification with the organization and also their sense of well-being. When enterprises engage in socially responsible activities, with conscience and responsibility fulfillment as the original intentions, they encourage their employees to participate in these efforts. As for employees, they discover the positive aspects of CSR activities in the process of participation; this leads to the generation of positive

emotions and affection for enterprises and ultimately enhancement of employees' work well-being and identification with the organization. Under these ideal conditions, the influence of employee perception of enterprise execution of CSR on employee well-being and organizational identification are significant. Finally, the results suggest that when employees are able to perceive the original intention and motive of the enterprises conducting social responsibility activities, it is easier for them to identify with the organization as well as generate a sense of occupational well-being.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

There is a positive relationship between CSR and employees' good working behavior, especially in innovative behavior. It is recognized by consumers because the company abides by social responsibility, or employees increase their recognition of the company due to CSR, thus increasing employee performance and reducing management cost. The likelihood of employees contributing to the enterprise increases with their sense of work well-being and sense of identification with the enterprise they work in. These contributions are reflected not only in the financial performance of the enterprise, but also in their altered behavior or in the overall organizational climate. Thus, another finding of the study is that in fulfilling their social responsibility, enterprises can also indirectly enhance the sense of well-being and organizational identification of their employees, which in turns facilitates the generation of employee innovative behavior. This also indicates that both internal factors (associated with employees themselves) and external factors play an active role in facilitating the formation of innovative behavior in employees. The study has also confirmed that sense of work well-being and organizational identification are the critical intermediary mechanism in the transformation of employee innovative behavior. Thus, when an enterprise engages in practical activities not related to financial performance but related instead to society's interests, this would lead employees to believe that the enterprise is good. This would then cause them to generate a sense of well-being and pride associated with working with the enterprise. This would subsequently lead to an enhanced sense of identification with the enterprise and ultimately lead to the generation of employee innovative behavior that benefit the enterprise.

When examining the influence of CSR perception of eastern enterprise employees on sustained innovation performance, the researchers adopted an affective events theory as the study framework in an attempt to clarify the mediating effects of employee well-being and organizational identification. The researchers adopted the integrated theoretical perspective (as suggested by relevant literature [44]) in analyzing the relationship between employee CSR perception and innovative behavior; this perspective demonstrated unique theoretical value in clarifying the relationship between the two variables. Additionally, the current research also addressed the gap in theoretical understanding of the relationship between employee CSR perception and innovative performance in the eastern cultural context, a problem identified by one report [45]. In short, the findings of the current study provide a new theoretical basis for in-depth understanding of the relationship of CSR perception to innovation performance among enterprise workers in an eastern social context.

The study has further clarified the critical intermediary mechanism involved in the transformation of Taiwanese enterprise workers' sense of work well-being and organizational identification into innovative performance. Employees can possess the positive mentality that they have competency and value in contributing to the enterprise, and this can cause employees to generate innovative behavior beneficial for their organizations. This conclusion provides not only further theoretical support regarding the role played by self-concept in the formation process of individual innovative performance (in response to a research suggestion) [46], but also enriches and optimizes theoretical understanding of the origin and influence of employee organizational identification. At the same time, based on the perspective of group-based self-representation in indigenous psychology, the researchers also explained the predictive validity of inferences associated with Chinese transformations of the sense of well-being into behavior that benefits the group they are a member of [42]. The expansion from

social psychology to organizational behavior injects new elements to the construction of employee innovation management theories that are suitable for the local context.

5.2. Practical Implications

The fulfilling of CSR has become a trend; the governments of many countries have made clear requests that enterprises disclose CSR-related information in their annual reports. Accordingly, an increasing number of enterprises are beginning to brief relevant stakeholders (e.g., employees, consumers, and even suppliers) on their policies, courses of action, and implementation results in three major dimensions, namely “economic,” “environment”, and “society”, through the publication of CSR reports. The CSR perception, employee well-being, organizational identification, and employee innovative behavior evaluation indicators applied by this study could serve as tools for enterprises gauging the psychological status and behavior of their employees when conducting CSR activities. In fact, in terms of enterprise operations, CSR activities should not be regarded merely as “value-adding” projects for improving the financial performance of enterprises. When implementing CSR activities, enterprises should also pay attention to the needs of stakeholders and engage in communication and feedback with them. Among different stakeholders, one of the most essential is employees. This is because employee perception of their job and their level of identification with the enterprise are directly reflected in their work performance, which in turn influences the enterprise’s operational performance or overall work climate. Therefore, enterprises should monitor employees’ status to grasp and utilize the knowledge and abilities of employees effectively. Moreover, enterprises can enhance employee understanding of their CSR strategies and contributions through a variety of methods, such as the publication of CSR reports, the incorporation of relevant information into education and training materials for new employees, the publication of relevant information on the official website of the enterprise, and raising awareness through regular publication of electronic bulletins. In addition, employees’ participation in the CSR implementation of the company will also increase their sense of identity with the organization. Because actually participating in corporate activities will deepen their understanding of the company, and then allow them to feel the pride of being a part of the company. Therefore, it is recommended that the human resources department of the enterprise use employee participation in corporate activities as a strategy to increase the employee’s sense of identity and affective commitment.

Furthermore, enterprises should deepen employees’ understanding of the connotations and effects of work well-being concepts (e.g., emotional well-being, perceived well-being, occupational well-being, and social well-being), regularly collect and evaluate information related to employees’ sense of work well-being, and adopt the following measures to facilitate improvement of sense of work well-being among employees: First, to enhance employees’ sense of emotional well-being, enterprises should attempt to create a warm and delightful work environment because this would facilitate the formation and maintenance of an active and optimistic attitude among employees. Enterprises should also provide employees with counseling options to help alleviate negative emotions that they experience at work; this helps reduce the influence of these negative emotions on employees’ sense of well-being. Second, to cultivate the sense of perceived well-being in employees, enterprises can tailor-make job-relevant cognitive skill and concentration training sessions for employees. This would lead to improved employee cognitive performance at work. Third, to enhance the sense of occupational well-being in employees, enterprises should tailor-make individualized career life plans for employees to satisfy their career development needs. Additionally, to enhance employees’ sense of job competence, enterprises could provide employees with education and training opportunities that strengthen their occupational competency. Enterprises must also provide positive feedback regarding the job performance of employees to facilitate the formation of the sense of occupational recognition. Fourth, to improve the sense of social well-being among employees, enterprises should create a united, harmonious, and sincere organizational climate in which enterprise members help each other out. Such a climate helps employees form friendly and close-knitted partnerships with the organization and

members of the organization. If these four categories of measures can be implemented simultaneously, they would exert a significant combined effect on improving employees' sense of well-being, and this would set the foundation for increased innovative performance of employees.

5.3. Limitations

Employee experience of participating in CSR activities conducted by their companies is supposed to be a key variable in the current study. Based on common sense, employees who have the experience of participating in CSR activities should have a significantly higher level of CSR perception compared with those who do not possess such experience. Restated, when employees have actually participated in or formed connections with the CSR activities of companies, their perception of the fulfilling of CSR by their company would be enhanced, and this would in turn influence the psychological condition of employees. Therefore, the researchers propose that employee experience of participating in CSR activities be incorporated into future studies as one variable to be examined. Additionally, the stakeholders of enterprises include several main categories, including society, consumers, and employees. Therefore, enterprises should focus not only on their profit-generating capability (in financial aspects), but also on whether they have the ability to cope with external and internal changes, sustain errors and risks, and grow continuously in the future. Only through the implementation of CSR strategies and planning are enterprises able to generate competitiveness and move toward becoming sustainable organizations. Accordingly, future researchers can also adopt a diverse approach to the measurement of CSR; more valuable and constructive findings can perhaps be obtained if CSR issues were examined from the perspective of governments, consumers, and employees.

6. Conclusions

The conclusions of the study possess a certain degree of significance in advancing understanding of employee perception of social responsibility fulfillment by enterprises and the development of employee innovative behavior. (1) CSR can facilitate organizational learning. Therefore, enterprises should not regard the fulfilling of social responsibility as an undue burden. On the contrary, enterprises should incorporate social responsibility as a component of enterprise development strategy and make it an essential means for them to enhance organizational cohesiveness and enterprise competitiveness. (2) Employee well-being and organizational identification both play a mediating role between CSR and employee innovative behavior. This explains the extent to which employee well-being and organizational identification affect the relationship between social responsibility and employee innovative behavior. Therefore, when fulfilling their social responsibilities, enterprises should also consider the psychological feelings of their employees. Enterprises can convey their visions to employees and influence their sense of contributing to society through sharing, to enhance employees' sense of participation in enterprise CSR operations; these efforts would enhance the influence of CSR on employee innovative behavior. For managers who want to fulfill CSR and create a happy enterprise, this inside-out CSR implementation model is ideal. Internally, the implementation model can enhance employee well-being, cohesiveness, and creativity. Externally, this inside-out CSR implementation model can enhance the overall value of the enterprise, including through improving the corporate image and brand value and even bringing substantial profit for the enterprise through cause marketing.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, Y.-B.L. and T.-J.W.; data curation, T.-J.W. and C.-L.P.; formal analysis, G.-Q.Z. and C.-L.P.; funding acquisition, Y.-B.L. and T.-J.W.; investigation, G.-Q.Z.; methodology, C.-L.P.; project administration, Y.-B.L.; software, G.-Q.Z. and C.-L.P.; supervision, Y.-B.L.; visualization, T.-J.W.; writing—original draft, Y.-B.L., G.-Q.Z., and C.-L.P.; writing—review & editing, T.-J.W. and C.-L.P. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: China Postdoctoral Science Foundation: No. 2018M632573. National Natural Science Foundation of China: No. 71702059.

Acknowledgments: The author is grateful to the valuable comments made by the reviewers. This research was supported by the China Postdoctoral Science Foundation (No. 2018M632573), and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (71702059).

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Dangelico, R.M. Improving firm environmental performance and reputation: The role of employee green teams. *Bus. Strategy Environ.* **2015**, *24*, 735–749. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wei, A.P.; Peng, C.L.; Huang, H.C.; Yeh, S.P. Effects of corporate social responsibility on firm performance: Does customer satisfaction matter? *Sustainability* **2020**, *12*, 7545. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Barrena-Martinez, J.; López-Fernández, M.; Romero-Fernandez, P. Drivers and barriers in socially responsible human resource management. *Sustainability* **2018**, *10*, 1532. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Gangi, F.; Mustilli, M.; Varrone, N. The impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) knowledge on corporate financial performance: Evidence from the European banking industry. *J. Knowl. Manag.* **2019**, *23*, 110–134. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wahba, H. Does the market value corporate environmental responsibility? An empirical examination. *Corp. Soc. Responsib. Environ. Manag.* **2008**, *15*, 89–99. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Drucker, P.F. Managing oneself. *Harv. Bus. Rev.* **2005**, *83*, 100–109.
- Shen, J.; Zhang, H. Socially responsible human resource management and employee support for external CSR: Roles of organizational CSR climate and perceived CSR directed toward employees. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2019**, *156*, 875–888. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Campa, D.; Zijlmans, E.W.A. Corporate social responsibility recognition and support for the arts: Evidence from European financial institutions. *Eur. Manag. J.* **2019**, *37*, 818–827. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Jose, A.; Lee, S.M. Environmental reporting of global corporations: A content analysis based on website disclosures. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2007**, *72*, 307–321. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wu, T.J.; Tsai, H.T.; Tai, Y.N. Would corporate social responsibility affect consumers' attitudes towards brand and purchase behavior? Buyer-seller guanxi as the moderator. *Rev. Cercet. Interv. Soc.* **2016**, *53*, 272–287.
- Cho, Y.; Lee, C. Effect of cooperative activity on innovation and management performances in the structural context. *Sci. Technol. Soc.* **2019**, *24*, 365–384. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Lennerts, S.; Schulze, A.; Tomczak, T. The asymmetric effects of exploitation and exploration on radical and incremental innovation performance: An uneven affair. *Eur. Manag. J.* **2020**, *38*, 121–134. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wu, T.J.; Gao, J.Y.; Wang, L.Y.; Yuan, K.S. Exploring links between polychronicity and job performance from the person–environment fit perspective—The mediating role of well-being. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* **2020**, *17*, 3711. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Wu, T.J.; Wang, L.Y.; Gao, J.Y.; Wei, A.P. Social Support and Well-Being of Chinese Special Education Teachers—An Emotional Labor Perspective. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* **2020**, *17*, 6884. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
- Albort-Morant, G.; Ariza-Montes, A.; Leal-Rodríguez, A.; Giorgi, G. How does positive work-related stress affect the degree of innovation development? *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* **2020**, *17*, 520. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Dey, P.K.; Malesios, C.; De, D.; Chowdhury, S.; Abdelaziz, F.B. The impact of lean management practices and sustainably-oriented innovation on sustainability performance of small and medium-sized enterprises: Empirical evidence from the uk. *Br. J. Manag.* **2020**, *31*, 141–161. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Eisenberger, R.; Fasolo, P.; Davis-LaMastro, V. Perceived organizational support and employee diligence, commitment, and innovation. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **1990**, *75*, 51. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Brammer, S.; Millington, A.; Rayton, B. The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organizational commitment. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag.* **2007**, *18*, 1701–1719. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Kim, S.; Lee, H. The effect of CSR fit and CSR authenticity on the brand attitude. *Sustainability* **2020**, *12*, 275. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Dirks, K.T.; Ferrin, D.L. Trust in leadership: Meta-analytic findings and implications for research and practice. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **2002**, *87*, 611. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Kim, H.R.; Lee, M.; Lee, H.T.; Kim, N.M. Corporate social responsibility and employee–company identification. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2010**, *95*, 557–569. [[CrossRef](#)]

22. Wu, T.J.; Xu, T.; Li, L.Q.; Yuan, K.S. "Touching with heart, reasoning by truth"! The impact of brand cues on mini-film advertising effect. *Int. J. Advert.* **2020**, *1*–29. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Wu, T.J.; Yuan, K.S.; Yen, D.C.; Xu, T. Building up resources in the relationship between work–family conflict and burnout among firefighters: Moderators of guanxi and emotion regulation strategies. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2019**, *28*, 430–441. [[CrossRef](#)]
24. Pignata, S.; Boyd, C.; Gillespie, N.; Provis, C.; Winefield, A.H. Awareness of stress-reduction interventions: The impact on employees' well-being and organizational attitudes. *Stress Health* **2016**, *32*, 231–243. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
25. Bettencourt, L.A. Change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors: The direct and moderating influence of goal orientation. *J. Retail.* **2004**, *80*, 165–180. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Wu, C.M.; Chen, T.J. Inspiring prosociality in hotel workplaces: Roles of authentic leadership, collective mindfulness, and collective thriving. *Tour. Manag. Perspect.* **2019**, *31*, 123–135. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Brunk, K.H. Exploring origins of ethical company/brand perceptions—A consumer perspective of corporate ethics. *J. Bus. Res.* **2010**, *63*, 255–262. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Richter, U.H.; Shirodkar, V.; Shete, N. Firm-level indicators of instrumental and political CSR processes—A multiple case study. *Eur. Manag. J.* **2020**, in press. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. Zadek, S. The path to corporate responsibility. In *Corporate Ethics and Corporate Governance*; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2007; pp. 159–172.
30. Yadlapalli, A.; Rahman, S.; Rogers, H. A dyadic perspective of socially responsible mechanisms for retailer–manufacturer relationship in an apparel industry. *Int. J. Phys. Distrib. Logist. Manag.* **2019**, *49*, 242–266. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Obrenovic, B.; Jianguo, D.; Tsoy, D.; Obrenovic, S.; Khan, M.A.S.; Anwar, F. The enjoyment of knowledge sharing: Impact of altruism on tacit knowledge-sharing behavior. *Front. Psychol.* **2020**, *11*, 1496. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Barney, J. Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *J. Manag.* **1991**, *17*, 99–120. [[CrossRef](#)]
33. Stoffers, J.; van der Heijden, B.; Schrijver, I. Towards a sustainable model of innovative work behaviors' enhancement: The mediating role of employability. *Sustainability* **2020**, *12*, 159. [[CrossRef](#)]
34. Majumdar, S.K.; Marcus, A.A. Rules versus discretion: The productivity consequences of flexible regulation. *Acad. Manag. J.* **2001**, *44*, 170–179.
35. Luo, L. Work motivation, job stress and employees' well-being. *J. Appl. Psychol. Manag. Stu.* **1999**, *8*, 61–72.
36. Liu, J.; Hui, C.; Lee, C.; Chen, Z.X. Why do i feel valued and why do I contribute? A relational approach to employee's organization-based self-esteem and job performance. *J. Manag. Stud.* **2013**, *50*, 1018–1040. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Mael, F.; Ashforth, B.E. Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *J. Organ. Behav.* **1992**, *13*, 103–123. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Van Knippenberg, D.; Sleebos, E. Organizational identification versus organizational commitment: Self-definition, social exchange, and job attitudes. *J. Organ. Behav.* **2006**, *27*, 571–584. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Epitropaki, O. A Multi-level investigation of psychological contract breach and organizational identification through the lens of perceived organizational membership: Testing a moderated–mediated model. *J. Organ. Behav.* **2013**, *34*, 65–86. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Du, S.; Bhattacharya, C.B.; Sen, S. Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of CSR communication. *Int. J. Manag. Rev.* **2010**, *12*, 8–19. [[CrossRef](#)]
41. Loon, M.; Otake-Ebede, L.; Stewart, J. The paradox of employee psychological well-being practices: An integrative literature review and new directions for research. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag.* **2019**, *30*, 156–187. [[CrossRef](#)]
42. Lu, L.; Gilmour, R. Individual-oriented and socially oriented cultural conceptions of subjective well-being: Conceptual analysis and scale development. *Asian J. Soc. Psychol.* **2006**, *9*, 36–49. [[CrossRef](#)]
43. Scott, S.G.; Bruce, R.A. Determinants of innovative behavior: A path model of individual innovation in the workplace. *Acad. Manag. J.* **1994**, *37*, 580–607.
44. James, K.; Brodersen, M.; Eisenberg, J. Workplace affect and workplace creativity: A review and preliminary model. *Hum. Perform.* **2004**, *17*, 169–194. [[CrossRef](#)]
45. Lyubomirsky, S.; King, L.; Diener, E. The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychol. Bull.* **2005**, *131*, 803. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]

46. Jaussi, K.S.; Randel, A.E.; Dionne, S.D. I am, I think I can, and I do: The role of personal identity, self-efficacy, and cross-application of experiences in creativity at work. *Creat. Res. J.* **2007**, *19*, 247–258. [[CrossRef](#)]

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



© 2020 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).