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Title	Encouraging Innovative Behaviour in White-collar Work — Idea Management Beneath the Surface		
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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Academics and management practitioners agree that a capacity to innovate and to accommodate to change is the key for successful performance in today's complex and turbulent environment. At the individual level, such desired innovativeness is demonstrated by employees who — without any obligation — generate, promote or implement development ideas. This study strives to uncover the drivers and barriers of innovative behaviour (Janssen 2000) in white-collar work, where it is often informal and embedded in daily work and hence, difficult to acknowledge and to enhance.</p> <p>The study was designed to examine white-collar employees' innovative behaviour through their personal experiences and perceptions. The qualitative data included field observations, informal discussions, background interviews, 16 in-depth interviews and several company documents. This triangulation of multiple sources was applied in order to gain diverse perspectives and to improve the credibility of the findings. The conclusions and practical recommendations are based on a synthesis of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci 2008), previous research on human resource management and innovation performance and the real-life experience of white-collar employees.</p> <p>The results of the study are divided into the kind of abilities, motivation, opportunities and organisational climate that enhance innovative behaviour. Problem solving, leadership and general social skills were considered the most important abilities in idea generation and promotion. On the other hand, these processes can be hampered by lack of knowledge exchange between people, disciplines and locations. Secondly, white-collar innovative behaviour tends to be driven by autonomous motivation, while extrinsic motivators, such as monetary incentives or pressure, are relatively ineffective in encouraging innovativeness. If employees' basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are satisfied with feedback, recognition and supervisor support, they are likely to relish challenges and learning opportunities, which leads into more and better ideas. In addition to supervisor support, opportunities for innovative behaviour are created by job design that increases influence, choice and task variety. What's more, an organisational climate that supports innovative behaviour is characterised by openness, trust and constructive debate. As a consequence, employees find it easier to express unrefined ideas and to present and to receive constructive criticism about them.</p>			
Key words	Autonomous motivation, idea management, innovative behavior, white-collar employees		
Further information			





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<p>Tutkijat ja liikejohtajat ovat yhtä mieltä siitä, että menestymiseen nykyisessä, nopeasti muuttuvassa ja monimutkaisessa liiketoimintaympäristössä tarvitaan innovaatioita. Yksilön tasolla innovatiivisuus ilmenee innovatiivisena toimintana eli ideoiden kehittämisenä, edistämisenä ja toteuttamisena (Janssen 2000). Tämä tutkimus pyrkii tunnistamaan tekijöitä, jotka edistävät tai estävät innovatiivista toimintaa erityisesti toimihenkilötyössä.</p> <p>Toimihenkilötyöntekijöiden innovatiivista toimintaa tarkastellaan heidän omien kokemustensa ja näkemystensä valossa. Tutkimuksen kvalitatiivinen aineisto koostuu havainnointimerkinnöistä, epämuodollisista keskusteluista, taustahaastattelusta, 16:sta syvähaastattelusta sekä kohdeorganisaation dokumenteista. Lähteitä trianguloimalla on pystytty tuomaan esiin useita näkökulmia ja vahvistamaan tulosten uskottavuutta. Tutkimuksen johtopäätökset ja käytännön toimenpidesuosituksukset perustuvat yhtäältä itseohjautuvuusteoriaan (Ryan & Deci 2008) ja aiempiin henkilöstöjohtamista ja innovatiivisuutta käsitteleviin tutkimuksiin ja toisaalta toimihenkilötyöntekijöiden autenttisiin kokemuksiin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset on luokiteltu innovatiivista toimintaa edistäviin kykyihin, motivaatioon ja mahdollisuuksiin, niihin liittyviin haasteisiin sekä otolliseen ilmapiiriin. Ongelmanratkaisukykyä, johtajuutta ja sosiaalisia taitoja pidettiin tärkeimpinä ideoiden kehittämisessä ja eteenpäin viemisessä. Toisaalta koettiin, että ideointi hiipuu, jos tieto liikkuu vaivalloisesti ihmisten, osaamisalueiden tai paikkakuntien välillä. Haastatteluissa kävi ilmi, että innovatiivisen toiminnan motivaatio on luonteeltaan autonomista, jolloin ulkoisilla motivaatiotekijöillä, kuten palkkioilla tai painostuksella, ei ole merkittävää vaikutusta. Mikäli työntekijöille sen sijaan tarjotaan palautetta, tunnustusta ja tukea niin että autonomisuuden, pystyvyyden ja yhteenkuuluvuuden perustarpeet tulevat tyydytyksi, on todennäköisempää että he tarttuvat hanakasti uusiin haasteisiin ja oppimismahdollisuuksiin. Esimiehen kannustuksen lisäksi myös työnmuotoilu, joka lisää työntekijän vaikutus- ja valintamahdollisuuksia sekä tehtävien monipuolisuutta, luo mahdollisuuksia innovatiiviseen toimintaan. Yllä mainittujen lisäksi on tärkeää huomioida avoimen ja luottamusta ruokkivan ilmapiirin vaikutus: Tällöin työntekijät uskaltavat herkemmin tuoda esiin ideoitaan ja toisaalta antaa ja ottaa vastaan niihin liittyvää rakentavaa kritiikkiä.</p>			
Asiasanat	Aloitteet, autonominen motivaatio, innovatiivinen toiminta, toimistotyöntekijät		
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ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE BEHAVIOUR IN WHITE-COLLAR WORK

Idea Management Beneath the Surface

Master's Thesis
in Management and Organisation

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The originality of this thesis has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines white-collar employees' innovative behaviour through their personal experiences and perceptions. It aims at identifying factors that either encourage or discourage idea generation and promotion in office work. The qualitative interview and observation data has been collected in a European manufacturing company, and this context will also be introduced in the following chapters.

1.1 Subject: White-collar Innovative Behaviour

In academic literature and management practice alike, innovation is considered the key for successful business performance (Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014). According to Kanter (2006), the imperative to innovate is not a fad but a fact that has been claimed again and again during the economic turns of the past 35 years. As a consequence, the skills of people working with ideas are considered indispensable while the value of other kind of work is deteriorating (Santos, Afonseca, Lopes, Félix, & Murmura 2018). On the other hand, idea generation is no longer assigned to scientists and development engineers alone, but organisations wish to benefit from the creative potential of every employee (Dorenbosch, van Engen, & Verhagan 2005). That is why it is vital to find out how to stimulate individual innovativeness.

The need to produce radical, high-profile innovations is not the only reason to encourage innovative behaviour. It is also closely related to employee proactivity and participation, which are topical issues in human resource management. According to Strauss and Parker (2014, 51) recent research on organisational behaviour has started to emphasise human agency: Management is less and less about ensuring that people fulfil their prescribed duties in an effective and diligent manner. Especially in uncertain and dynamic environments, successful work performance requires that employees take personal initiative in anticipating and adjusting to change.

In this study, idea management is considered a function of human resource management. It does not only involve providing an employee suggestion system, but designing and maintaining a set of practices aimed at stimulating creative ideas among the entire personnel. As such, idea management is crucial in driving business excellence and creating a culture of continuous improvement (Santos et al. 2018, 216—217). In this respect, this study takes part in the academic discussion about human resource management and its connection to performance (Paauwe & Boselie 2005). As stated by Chen and Huang (2009, 107—108), the expertise in individual minds needs to be leveraged and it can be done with strategic HR practices.

This study strives to look at the less known aspects of idea management: First of all, it concentrates on white-collar employees who are, in general, highly educated and experts in their own field and, thus, hold a great potential for ideas (De Spiegelaere, Van Gyes, & Hootegem 2012). However, incremental innovations that are created within the relatively wide tasks and responsibilities of a white-collar job role tend to remain unnoticed. Secondly, innovativeness is typically measured and rewarded by innovation outcomes rather than innovation activity (Fernandez & Moldogaziev 2013). With an emphasis on individual innovative behaviour, this study argues that even those ideas that are eventually rejected play an important role in encouraging other employees to participate and present their ideas.

1.2 Context: an International Manufacturing Company

The empirical data of the study has been collected at Oras Group, which has also commissioned the research. The company manufactures sanitary fittings and sells them to business customers, installers and consumers alike. The group has 1443 employees and four production sites: in Finland, Germany, Czech republic and Poland. The headquarters is located in Rauma and there is another office in Stuttgart. In addition, there are several sales teams operating in other European countries. The turnover of the group was 227.7 million euros in 2018. (Oras Group 2019)

Oras Group makes an interesting backdrop to study innovative behaviour from a human resource management perspective for several reasons. First, the group has named increasing innovations one of its strategic objectives (Oras Group Strategy 2018-2020). Individual contribution to this target is reviewed annually with the supervisor in the personal development discussion. Second, an extensive human resource development program focusing on corporate values and organisational culture has been at place since the merger with German Hansa Armaturen GmbH in 2014 (Huunonen, discussion 13.11.2017). Third, the group has recently launched an idea management system aimed at collecting, developing and implementing employees' ideas.

The idea management system at Oras Group is a process that involves submitting, classifying, assessing, rewarding and developing ideas. The company's intranet page introducing the system declares that the aim is to make the most out of the "creativity, expertise and competence" of the "entire personnel". In the beginning, the submitter has to allocate his idea into one of the five categories: safety observations, improvement proposals, initiatives, future potentials and innovations. The further development and implementation of ideas depends on the type of the idea and on the various experts and decision-makers involved. (Huunonen, discussion 13.11.2017.)

Safety observations and improvement proposals accepted by the supervisor can generally be implemented in a swift manner within the team or function. Initiatives and future potentials, on the other hand, require a more complicated procedure. The submitters are expected to devise a business plan defining future income or cost savings which will later be applied as a criteria in assessing and rewarding for an implemented idea. Oras Group has nominated five idea coordinators to provide assistance in idea submission, to promote and develop the system and to coordinate the further development of ideas. (Huunonen, discussion 13.11.2017.)

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of the thesis is two-fold: First, it aims at describing innovative behaviour while taking into account the particularities of white-collar work, the commissioning organisation and the industry in question. It is expected that these contextual factors significantly influence behaviour as well as its motivation and outcomes. Second, building on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, the study will seek to provide practical recommendations about how to encourage innovative behaviour.

The research questions are as follows:

- What encourages innovative behaviour in white-collar work?
 - What kind of abilities and opportunities are needed for idea generation and promotion?
 - Where does motivation for innovative behaviour stem from?

The main question concerns the prerequisites of individual innovative behaviour. Following Lepak, Liao, Chung and Harden (2006), it is assumed that these factors can be classified into the abilities, the motivation and the opportunities that influence performance. It is also assumed that the factors that support innovative behaviour are somewhat different in the office than in manufacturing work. Hence, the subquestions aim at understanding the antecedents of innovative behaviour in more detail and in this particular context.

This thesis is subtitled “Idea Management Beneath the Surface”, which suggests that there are several less obvious issues worth studying. This point is further illustrated by an iceberg metaphor in Figure 1. The formal suggestion system (referred to as IMS) brings forth active submitters and accepted ideas. The database also includes rejected ideas, but only the ones that have been submitted. This study aims at uncovering the reasons for withholding or suppressing ideas.

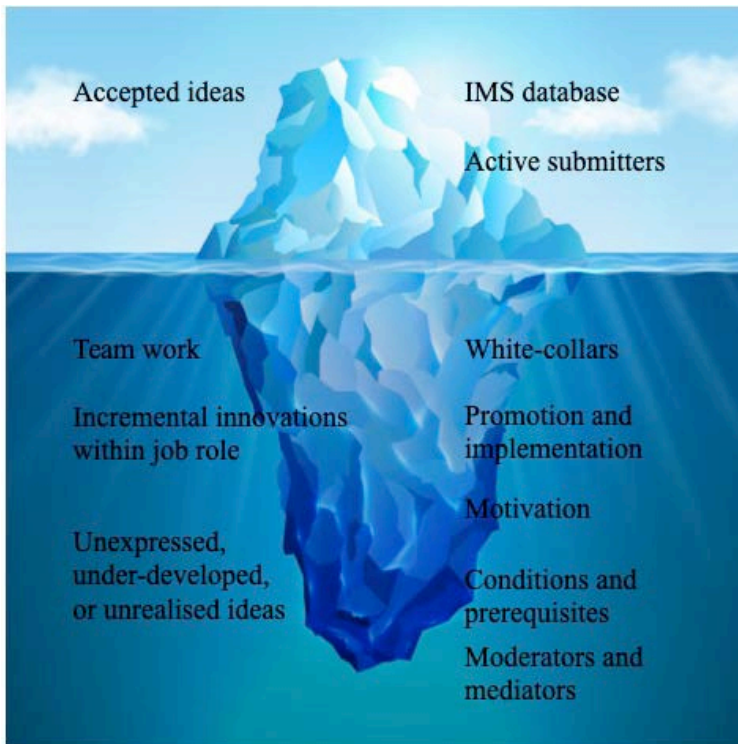


Figure 1: Idea management beneath the surface (The backdrop was downloaded from www.freepik.com)

What's more, it is assumed that there is, in particular, a lot of white-collar innovative behaviour that is not apparent or recorded. First, white-collar employees are expected to participate in the development of their own work and immediate work environment as part of their job. They are also authorised to implement those incremental improvements themselves. Second, the definition of innovative work behaviour includes four phases: Problem recognition, idea generation, idea promotion and idea implementation. The idea management system only displays the second phase by recording idea submissions. Consequently, there is a lot of innovative behaviour that is less obvious and happens before and after the idea submission.

Motivation is one of the aspects of innovative behaviour that lie even deeper in the water. This study applies self-determination theory in an attempt to explain why white-collar workers engage in innovative behaviour. In doing so, the fundamental question is whether their motivation is more autonomous or controlled by nature. Furthermore, this study aims at identifying the conditions that facilitate the motivation for innovative behaviour. Finally, it is likely that there are several mediators and moderators that either enhance or diminish the effect that even the best of conditions can have on innovative behaviour. Such issues are, however, beyond the scope of this study.

1.4 Practical and Theoretical Contribution

The present study differs somewhat from the mainstream research about innovation and human resource management. Its theoretical contribution stems from its qualitative methodology and the chosen level of analysis. In previous research, it has been more popular to apply quantitative methods and to investigate innovativeness as an organisation-level phenomenon (see, for example, Dediu, Leka, & Jain 2018; Fu, Flood, Bosak, Morris, & O'Regan 2015). For example, Chen and Huang (2009) asked respondents to evaluate their company's innovation performance by a scale related to technical and administrative innovations and aimed at identifying HR practices that encourage innovativeness through regression analysis.

According to Bos-Nehles, Renkema and Janssen (2017) there is, so far, little knowledge about nurturing innovations at the individual level. However, as can be seen in the literature review of this report, there is a large number of recent surveys investigating various factors that influence innovative behaviour in general. These range from individual learning style (Montani, Odoardi, & Battistelli 2014) to the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Sanders, Moorkamp, Torcka, Groeneveld, & Groeneveld 2010)

In a rare peer-reviewed qualitative study, Abstein and Spieth (2014) interviewed 25 HR experts from German companies that they considered innovative by looking at the publicly available reports and documents. It is, however, often stated that the implemented HR practices do not always replicate the good intention of the system designers. What's more, employees may perceive the practices and their underlying reasons in a different way. (Paauwe & Boselie 2005.) Therefore, it is important to cast a light on the employee experience: The interpretations that employees make about expected behaviour and the manifestations of innovativeness and proactivity in their daily work. The aim of this study is to understand what drives innovative behaviour at a grass-root level by listening to personal accounts of idea generation and promotion.

What's more, innovative behaviour has not been extensively studied among white-collar employees. Fu et al. (2015) confirmed that high performance work systems, which were originally applied in manufacturing context (Appelbaum 2000), also contribute to innovation performance in professional service firms. In their study, individual innovative behaviour was found to mediate the efficacy of the HR practices. Only one report distinguishing between white-collar and blue-collar employees' innovative behaviour (De Spiegelaere et al. 2012) was found whilst gathering theoretical data for this study.

In addition, this study takes part in the theoretical discussion about the applications of Self-Determination Theory to individual work performance. SDT has been tested in a large number of empirical studies (Ryan & Deci 2017) and the aim of this study is not to prove its validity in explaining innovative behaviour nor the lack of it. Rather, the study

aims at presenting examples of the various kinds of motivation for innovative behaviour and at understanding how the quality of motivation can influence individual creativity, learning and proactivity.

On the other hand, there is undeniably a managerial interest in asking how to support innovative behaviour (Tienari & Meriläinen 2013, 120). In examining the very deep and personal experiences of white-collar employees, this study aims at generating a practical insight that helps to design appropriate HR practices: Once the special characteristics and requirements of white-collar innovative behaviour are well known, it will be possible to indicate how to best acknowledge and provide for them.

.

2 PHILOSOPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES

This thesis is a qualitative study. Its philosophical leaning is towards constructivist and interpretivist research paradigms. The analysis was based on comparing the empirical data to existing theory and research. With regard to data collection methods, the research design was intentionally flexible, which allowed for an iterative approach in order to discover the most appropriate methods for exploring such an obscure phenomenon. Finally, the different types of data were triangulated to reduce informant bias and to improve the soundness of the conclusions.

2.1 Ontology and Epistemology

The ontological presumptions adopted in this thesis follow constructivist thinking: It is assumed that the meaning of innovative behaviour is not absolute, nor constant. Rather, there are simultaneously multiple different conceptions of what could be considered innovative. Moreover, these conceptions are constantly altered and shaped in social interaction (Grix 2002, 177). In other words, the nature of reality is different depending on whose perspective it is being examined from (Tienari & Meriläinen 2013, 116).

Epistemology, on the other hand, concerns the nature of knowledge that is available for researchers. According to Grix (2002, 178), interpretivism concentrates on a subjective meaning. The approach appears fitting as innovative behaviour is a very obscure phenomenon, particularly so in white-collar work. Indeed, sometimes employees find it difficult to assess the innovativeness of their own behaviour. As one interviewee very aptly put it:

“My first thought was that I cannot answer to these. Or maybe I haven’t considered myself a person with lots of ideas – so why am I being interviewed? But on the other hand, it is simply so ordinary for me that I don’t even realise what is an idea and what is just daily work.”

(Interview B 8)

Interpretivist research also pays attention to the subjectivity of the researcher. Hence, the results of this study should be regarded as one interpretation among many — an interpretation that is influenced by the researcher’s background and presumptions. What’s more, the interaction between the researcher and the informants shapes both parties and inevitably affects on what is being said and how it is understood and ultimately reported. (Tienari & Meriläinen 2013, 116.)

The departure point for this study is that employee innovativeness and proactivity is desired by the organisation management. It is, therefore, crucial to examine innovative

behaviour through its various interpretations: How does management define it? How is it communicated? How are these expectations interpreted by white-collar employees? How does innovative behaviour occur in white-collar work? How are these activities regarded by the actors themselves, their colleagues or their supervisors?

According to Patton (2002, 542—546) different qualitative research approaches imply different evaluation criteria, which, in turn, determine the credibility of the findings. In fact, constructivist and interpretivist approaches have replaced the traditional scientific evaluation criteria by an entirely new vocabulary. While the quality of research has conventionally been judged by validity, reliability and objectivity, a constructivist qualitative inquiry should be evaluated in terms of its dependability and authenticity. The former refers to a systematic process, the latter implies that the researcher is conscious of his or her own perspective, appreciates the views of others and depicts them in an unbiased way.

In addition to the ontological and epistemological choices above, this thesis maintains presumptions that stem from positive psychology. According to Seligman and Csikzentmihalyi (2000), after the Second World War, the majority of psychological research has concentrated on pathology – on curing mental disorder and identifying and correcting what is wrong in human mind and behaviour. Positive psychology on the other hand, aims at amplifying positive human qualities and strengths such as hope, creativity, courage and perseverance. Positive psychology studies issues like well-being and satisfaction, positive traits and citizenship in search of a key to individual fulfilment and a thriving community.

Positive psychology has influenced the basic premises of self-determination theory, which are also adopted in this study. Self-determination theory builds on the assumption that people have a natural tendency to be curious and to extend themselves. Its sub-theory about the basic human needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness has led into a branch of research on the social contexts that enable this optimal human functioning. (Ryan & Deci, 2000.) Consequently, while conducting this research, it has been assumed that, given the right conditions, all employees can and will give their best and that these thriving individuals are the fundamental force behind successful organisational performance.

2.2 Focus and Restrictions

Innovation and innovativeness can be examined at various levels: Innovative behaviour is a micro level phenomenon whereas, for example, innovative culture deals with the macro level of organisational studies (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou 2014). The focus of this thesis is on the former i.e. individual behaviour and on the means of supporting the desired kind of behaviour. According to Janssen's (2000) definition, innovative behaviour consists of four phases: problem recognition, idea generation, idea promotion and idea

realisation. As for theoretical concepts, this research concentrates on the idea generation and promotion phases.

In the focal organisation, there is an idea management system focusing on collecting, classifying and assessing employees' ideas. It has been estimated that the majority of ideas has been submitted by blue-collar workers (Äärilä, discussion 2018). However, it could be presumed that there is a significant amount of white-collar innovative behaviour that is not recorded nor acknowledged in the system. Producing accepted ideas requires a lot of white-collar contribution in promoting the idea and providing technical assistance. Even more white-collar effort is needed in implementing the idea. Considering corporate level objectives there is a clear need to acknowledge and support this kind of innovative behaviour, hence the focus on white-collar work in the study.

There are roughly 600 white-collar workers in Oras Group. The sampling criteria for the in-depth interviews of this study will be presented in detail in chapter 2.3.1. Dorenbosch et al. (2005, p. 133) had a similar focus in their survey that concerned the effects of job design on innovative behaviour. The researchers assumed that concentrating on administrative, knowledge-intensive professions would reduce such inconsistencies in data that result from fundamental differences in job content.

Furthermore, this study will concentrate on process-related ideas (cf. Bessant & Tidd 2015, 17), such as improvement in work methods, practices and policies. The product-related ideas cannot be entirely excluded but they are considered less interesting from the research point of view. This perception stems from the background interviews conducted during the first phase of the field research: Generating product-related ideas is an integral part of work for those involved in the new product development process, whereas the responsibility for developing working methods and processes is not as explicitly assigned. In fact, such continuous improvement is implicitly expected from all white-collar employees but only some of them appear to be actively engaged in it.

Oras Goup is a multinational company. According to the idea management database there are some differences in the idea submission rates between sites. This is in line with the notion that cultural traits are likely to have a moderating effect on employee innovative behaviour (Ke, Tan, Sia, & Wei 2012; Wallace, Butts, Johnson, Stevens, & Smith 2016) — an effect which could not be entirely eliminated in the study. On the other hand, innovative behaviour is such a complex issue that interviewees had to be fluent in English or Finnish. This practical limitation also influenced the interviewee selection.

2.3 Methodology

This study is a qualitative inquiry. Following Grix (2002, 179), methodology is considered here as the overall strategy or design of the research rather than simply a set of methods for data collection and analysis. At the beginning, the project was only roughly designed to allow for iteration and exploration once a deeper understanding of the phenomenon would be developed. Accordingly, the early background research guided the following selection of the in-depth interviewees as well as the interview design. Some of the themes for the unstructured interviews were also derived from previous research concerning the antecedents of innovative behaviour. What's more, the research project span over a considerable period of time, which enabled reflection and the use of multiple methods.

According to Stake (1998, 86—89), a case study concentrates on a clearly framed, distinguishable entity; “one among others”. Although this research is not a case study according to Stake's definition, all empirical data is gathered in one organisation and the particularities of the industry and the organisation are taken into consideration throughout the research process. In other words, the analysis, as well as the conclusions, are highly context-sensitive. Furthermore, the managerial implications of this research are a synthesis of the theoretical and the empirical data. In that sense, the recommendations are tailored for the special characteristics and requirements of Oras Group business.

Another element that distinguishes this research from a descriptive case study, is its constructive approach. The purpose is not to describe the uniqueness of the focal organisation at length but to examine the problems associated with idea management in white-collar work and to apply scientific methods in order to generate practical solutions. According to Kasanen, Lukka and Siitonen (1993, 252—256), such “normative applications” differ from scientific problem solving because they are likely to be suitable to other similar companies. On the other hand, a constructive study should not be confused with consulting, where no scientific rigor is required. Constructive approach is action-oriented as it emphasises human experience rather than universal laws, and decision-oriented as it assumes a managerial perspective.

The present study analyses data from multiple sources, namely observations, interviews and company documents. This triangulation of data sources is applied in order to gain diverse perspectives and to improve the credibility of the findings. However, as Patton (2002, 559) remarks, the objective is not to prove that all sources point at the same direction. On the contrary, it is likely that there are inconsistencies in the data just as there is variance in any real-life phenomenon.

Most empirical data was collected between October 2018 and April 2019 in two phases. During autumn 2018 the emphasis was on descriptive data: The aim was to explore white-collar innovative behaviour at the Oras Group context. A more prescriptive approach was adopted during spring 2019: First, the extant research findings about

HRM's role in supporting innovative behaviour were categorised according to the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework (Lepak et al. 2006). This literature review is presented in Chapter 4.2. Second, 16 individual, in-depth interviews were conducted among the white-collar employees of the company in order to investigate their experiences and perceptions about idea generation at work. The interview findings, the observations and the literature review informed the subsequent analysis on how to support white-collar innovative behaviour.

2.3.1 Interviews in Two Phases

In addition to pre-study discussions, six background interviews and several informal discussions were conducted during the first phase of the field research. The background research was aimed at gaining a more detailed understanding of white-collar ideas as well as identifying relevant interviewees for the second phase of the field research. The final selection was made in consultation with the Oras Group idea management experts and members of the extended management team:

At the end of the background interviews, the idea management experts were asked to name white-collar employees who, in their opinion, had demonstrated innovative behaviour. They were prompted with a mind map about white-collar ideas, which pointed out that innovative behaviour can take many forms, such as idea submission, active continuous improvement within a work role or co-operation with several departments in developing working methods.

The members of the extended management team, for their part, were presented with the following criteria for assessing innovative behaviour. It has formerly been used in Scott and Bruce's (1994, 607) study, in which supervisors were asked to rate how often their subordinates:

- “search out new technologies, techniques, processes or product ideas
- generate creative ideas
- promote and champion ideas to others
- investigate and secure funds needed to implement new ideas
- develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas
- are innovative”

In this case, the managers were asked to suggest white-collar employees whom they considered particularly active in this kind of behaviour. Although it is not easy to identify innovative behaviour, Dorenbosch et al. (2005, 140) have proposed that supervisors could have a more objective view than employees themselves. Altogether, there were 28 candidates suggested for the in-depth interviews. They came from all the different white-collar

functions of the organisation in order to attain a diverse and detailed — if not exhaustive — picture of white-collar innovative behaviour. This cross-functional informant selection was further inspired by De Spiegelaere et al. (2015) who remind that innovations do not stem from research and development departments alone, although they have conventionally been at the focus of innovation research.

Table 1 presents the selected interviewees' function and the site they most often work at. The length of employment and the number of subordinates is also listed in order to illustrate that the interview sample included managers as well as non-managers and long-standing members of the organisation along with people who were relatively new to the company.

Table 1: The background information of the interviewees

Code	Date	Function	Subordinates	Location	Tenure
Background interviews					
A1	16.10.	HRM	0	Stuttgart	3,5
A2	22.10.	Business development	0	Rauma	10
A3	23.10.	Category management	0	Continental Europe	1
A4	23.10.	Technology	1	Stuttgart	31
A5	30.10.	Category management	0	Nordic Countries	1,5
A6	30.10.	R&D	12	Rauma	23,5
In-depth interviews					
B1	22.1.	HRM	6	Olesno	11,5
B2	23.1.	R&D	0	Rauma	26,5
B3	24.1.	Production	2	Rauma	24,5
B4	24.1.	Quality	0	Rauma	15,5
B5	31.1.	Finance	0	Rauma	0,5
B6	31.1.	Purchasing	9	Rauma	7,5
B7	6.2.	Sales	1	Nordic Countries	18
B8	6.2.	Marketing	0	Rauma	2,5
B9	7.2.	Sales	10	Nordic Countries	2,5
B10	25.2.	R&D	0	Stuttgart	4,5
B11	26.2.	Marketing	0	Stuttgart	1,5
B12	26.2.	Purchasing	0	Stuttgart	18,5
B13	28.2.	Production	0	Kralovice	9,4
B14	28.2.	Production	1	Kralovice	14,5
B15	7.3.	Finance	8	Olesno	22,5
B16	14.3.	Quality	12	Olesno	11

The interviewees' background information is not reported here in an attempt to explain the nature of their responses, but in order to demonstrate the variety of perspectives, attitudes and opinions included in the data of this study. The interviewees' age or sex is not presented as to protect their identity, but the sample consisted of eight women and fourteen men. Two of the interviewees were below 30 years old and four of them over 50.

According to Anderson, Potocnik and Zhou (2014) a range of individual factors as well as task content and social context influence on how innovative behaviour occurs. Hence, it was anticipated that some answers could be specific to certain tasks or national cultures. In order to improve the robustness of the findings it was ensured that there were

at least two representatives of the selected functions and company sites. Although the interview sample can be considered relatively large, it does not include all white-collar functions and sites within the focal organisation because of practical limitations.

The questions presented at the interviews evolved as the research progressed. After the background research, a lengthy interview guide was drafted with questions related to six themes: job characteristics, idea management, skills and abilities in innovative behaviour, acquiring new knowledge, motivation for innovative behaviour and organisational climate for innovation. Following feedback from the company's HRD specialists some questions were highlighted and some eliminated. This outline was then sent to each participant a few days before the interview. The interviews were usually agreed well in advance and a face-to-face contact was preferred. Only 5 in-depth interviews were conducted and recorded over Skype.

In practice, the interviewees were allowed to speak about the fore-mentioned themes in an unstructured manner and in their preferred order. Towards the end of the interview, which lasted between 45 and 75 minutes, the researcher raised those themes or questions that were, so far, uncovered. This approach aimed at a relaxed and confidential atmosphere that would yield a narrative that was as close to the interviewee's authentic experience as possible.

2.3.2 Observations and Company Documents

The data collection methods of this study could be described ethnographic. According to Atkinson and Hammersley (1998, 110) it is possible to apply ethnographic methods selectively without making a complete commitment to ethnography. For example, they could be appropriate when exploring the nature of a phenomenon rather than testing hypothesis about it. Accordingly, informal conversations, comments and impressions were recorded in the form of a diary, which was later coded and analysed together the interview transcripts.

The observations were made during 1) an idea management team meeting in Stuttgart in April 2018, 2) roughly 40 working days at the company office in Rauma between October 2018 and April 2019 and 3) during a four-day journey to Stuttgart and Kralovice sites in February 2019. During the background research phase, keeping field notes was a way to record reflections while building an understanding of white-collar innovative behaviour. Later, the diary played a complimentary role in the analysis of the data since informal conversations often confirmed and sometimes contradicted the points risen in the in-depth interviews. While the diary proved to be good way to record more informal or even confidential conversations, it is worth noting here that such data makes this study

a very subjective account (Patton 2002, 546). The potential biases of the researcher will be discussed in the self-evaluation of this study in chapter 6.4.

There were also elements of participant observation (Atkinson & Hammersley 1998, 111). The first observations date back to April 2018 when the researcher participated in an idea management team meeting at the company office in Stuttgart. The team holds monthly meetings and the researcher was later able to attend another three Skype conferences. The members of the team, who act as local idea coordinators in the company locations, provided invaluable assistance and feedback throughout the project. In the meetings, the coordinators shared the challenges and successes they had experienced in promoting idea management and evaluated ways to further develop the system. The researcher's role was to provide an external opinion and to present updates and preliminary findings as the research progressed.

In addition, several company sources were utilized in this study. Although it was stated that the formal suggestion system only represents a small part of idea management (Huunonen & Toivonen, discussion 16.3.2018), examining it provided a good starting point for the research. At Oras Group, employees' ideas are recorded in the integrated management system (IMS) -software. The guidelines for the use of the IMS as well as the introduction material that had been used in launching the system were examined to gain a general idea of the internal communication related to idea management. The database, with ideas listed according to their type and the site they originated from, provided examples of the content of ideas as well as information about the total amount of them, their evaluation and possible implementation.

Selected results from an employee survey conducted in 2018 by an external consulting company were also examined for the purposes of this study. The survey relates to three themes, namely commitment, leadership and performance, which are all inquired about at three different levels: the respondent's own work, the unit and the entire company. The results are compared to a norm that represents the mean value among all the companies that have participated in the same survey in the countries where Oras Group is located. Out of the total of 54 items on the survey, 12 most relevant ones were chosen for closer examination:

- Empowerment
 - 9 Independence of decision making
 - 10 Feedback on the results of one's work
 - 11 Supervisors interest in ideas
- Communication and involvement
 - 17 Information flow in this team
 - 19 Possibilities to participate and suggest
 - 21 Sharing know-how
- Managerial work

- 23 Supervisor's trust to staff
- 24 Freedom to express disagreements
- 26 Supervisor acknowledges good work
- Agility and effectiveness
 - 31 Agility in adopting new procedures
 - 32 Working environment
 - 33 Living up to the values

Furthermore, written documents, such as the business strategy, the people strategy and the personal development discussion (PDD) form, were investigated in order to define organisational objectives for idea management and the explicit expectations related to individual innovative behaviour. The company's e-learning modules of "organisational behaviour" and "leadership" were looked into to find out how these objectives translate into practical guidelines. What's more, since the documents and the training modules handled several issues related to proactivity and innovativeness, referring to these familiar concepts in the interviews was an effective way to establish common language and, thus, to facilitate the interaction.

2.3.3 The Method of Analysis

The analysis of the in-depth interviews and observation data was carried out by the NVivo –software. The relevant notes or comments were grouped into seven major themes: At first, as guided by the background research as well as the literature review, comments related to abilities, motivation, opportunities or organisational climate were coded accordingly. There were, however, additional themes that emerged from the interviews. They concerned the idea management's link to business strategy, the nature and definition of innovative behaviour and interviewees' explanations for the occasional lack of it. A detailed list of the coded themes and their sub-categories is provided in the appendix of this report.

Subsequently, the results were reviewed in a ten-page document, which included a great amount of direct quotes. This was first shared with the idea management team to get feedback. Next, as suggested by Patton (2002, 560) in order to validate the findings and to correct any misinterpretations, the review was also e-mailed to the in-depth interview participants. Five of them did reply with some corrections or positive comments.

The analytic approach was mainly inductive — particularly so during the background research: The aim was to explore the nature and particularities of white-collar innovative behaviour and let the background interviewees spontaneously offer potential definitions

and explanations. Later, the AMO-framework (Lepak et al. 2006) was applied as it became apparent that motivation could not be examined detached from other factors that contribute to individual innovative behaviour. The AMO-model is a well-established way to explain human resource management's influence on performance suggesting that desired employee behaviour presumes all three: the ability, the motivation and the opportunity to perform (Boselie, Dietz & Boon 2005). Applying a pre-designed framework gave the following coding and categorising a more deductive tone. As mentioned above, however, the coding also allowed for emergent themes and was, therefore, inductive. (Patton 2002, 453—454.)

The conclusions of this study are based on a synthesis of the HR practices recommended by previous researchers and the real-life experience of white-collar employees. Thus, it was possible to answer the original research question and to surface some of the less evident aspects of idea management.

3 INNOVATION AND AUTONOMOUS MOTIVATION

The following chapter will introduce the essential theories and concepts guiding this research. For one, they are linked to innovation and idea management, for the other, to autonomous motivation. The latter is a concept derived from self-determination theory. It proposes that the quality of motivation varies — not just between intrinsic and extrinsic — but along a continuum ranging from controlled into autonomous types of motivation. Identifying the type of motivation will assist in predicting important performance and well-being outcomes. (Deci & Ryan 2008.) Finally, the two themes will be connected by presenting applications of self-determination theory in previous research concerning innovation performance.

3.1 Innovations and Idea Management

In order to introduce the concept of innovative behaviour it is necessary, at first, to set it in the wider context of innovations and innovation management. According to Kanter (1988) “innovation is the creation and exploitation of new ideas”. Innovation management, on the other hand, concerns the managerial challenge of making them happen (Tidd & Bessant 2013).

Bessant and Tidd (2015, 17) define innovations as four dimensions of change: production innovation, process innovation, position innovation and paradigm innovation. Production innovation involves a change in offered products or services whereas process innovation refers to a new production method or operating procedure. Position innovation could, for example, be a shift in the targeted customer segment or other fundamental change in the business strategy. Paradigm innovation, on the other hand, implies a transformation in approach and thinking and therefore affects all operations and every member within the organisation.

Another way to explain the nature of innovations is the classic distinction between radical and incremental innovations. Andriopoulos and Dawson (2009, 31) state that innovations occur in three levels: Incremental innovations concern small improvements based on existing knowledge and capabilities. Modular innovations are more significant and could involve some advancement in technology. Radical innovations, for their part, require entirely new knowledge and often replace the previous products or methods.

In addition to focusing on the different types of innovation, innovation can also be described as a process involving the generation, selection and launching of innovations (Andriopoulos 2009). While creativity has typically been associated with idea generation only, innovation studies have tended to include the latter stage of idea implementation (Anderson et al. 2014). Kanter (1988) describes the innovation process as uncertain,

knowledge-intensive and controversial. In addition, it crosses organisational boundaries since it concerns interdisciplinary ideas and often requires several organisational functions to accommodate the change and co-operate in the implementation. Kanter argues that innovations can be managed despite their unpredictable, fragile and political nature. From this perspective, innovation management signifies creating conditions that support flexibility, diversity and collaboration.

Tidd and Bessant (2013, 124—125) emphasise that innovation management does not only concern functions like product development and design or marketing which are typically associated with it. High involvement in innovation is based on the assumption that every employee possesses basic creative skills and problem-solving abilities and that innovativeness and continuous improvement should be encouraged throughout the organisation. Although single initiatives might only deal with incremental improvements, their combined effect on organisational level performance has turned out to be significant in a number of cases.

In academic literature, idea management has typically been defined as a process of generating, evaluating and developing employees' ideas. Additionally, it has been associated with tasks such as the screening, filtering, communicating, classifying and storing of ideas. (Mikelsone & Liela 2016, 6) Idea management systems or employee suggestion schemes are typically designed for those ends: To stimulate and to collect constructive development ideas from all members of staff (Milner, Kinnell, & Usherwood 1995; van Dijk & van den Ende 2002). Du Plessis, Marx and Wilson (2008) add that the acknowledgement of ideas is a fundamental part of the system. Furthermore, they argue that a suggestion scheme is one of the most undervalued management tools.

Santos et al (2018) identify two different approaches to suggestion systems in the extant literature: the American and the Japanese. The former stresses great ideas and economic benefits, whereas the latter focuses on numerous small process improvements. According to Santos et al., it is possible to reach either objective but not necessarily both of them. They highlight the importance of employees' ideas for quality and environment management. Lasrado et al (2017), for their part, state that suggestion schemes are a crucial part of creating a culture of continuous improvement.

Santos et al. (2018, 225—227) examined idea management systems in four case organisations and discovered several critical success factors:

- involvement of top management
- willingness to share and develop ideas
- confirmed results
- distribution of good results
- innovative mindset
- complete transparency
- swift response and dynamic system development

- recognition

According to Santos et al., the above elements are all essential if an idea management system is to support innovation and business excellence. However, top management involvement, in the form of defining the idea management objectives as well as personal attendance and participation, was considered the most important of them all.

In general, suggestion systems aim at greater employee engagement and creativity. They are also expected to yield both tangible and intangible benefits such as cost savings, increased sales or improved working conditions. (Lasrado, Gomiseck, & Uzbek 2017.) What's more, it has been suggested that an idea management system will indirectly increase product, service and process innovations as a consequence of heightened creativity and participation. (Lasrado et al., 2017; Santos et al., 2018)

In conclusion, idea management, which aims at utilizing the creative potential of all employees, can be seen as a small part of the wider field of innovation management. In practice, idea management is often manifested in an idea management system or an employee suggestion system. Although the launch of such a system ignited this study, innovative behaviour occurs both within and outside a formal system, as can be concluded from the following.

3.2 Defining and Measuring Innovative Behaviour

The innovation process described above is also essential for understanding innovative behaviour. According to Scott and Bruce (1994) individual innovative behaviour is a multi-stage process, where different activities characterise each stage. However, the activities are discontinuous and interrelated so that individuals can be at the same time involved in recognising problems, generating ideas, seeking sponsorship and producing prototypes. Janssen (2000) divided innovative work behaviour into three stages: generating, promoting and realising ideas. Later, De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) added the first stage of problem recognition but found little support for the distinctiveness of the various stages. What's more, it has been pointed out that innovative work behaviour handles creativity but is a broader concept since it also includes the idea promotion and realisation phase (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017; De Spiegelare et al. 2012).

Janssen (2000, 288) defined innovative work behaviour as “the intentional creation, introduction and application of new ideas within a work role, group or organization, in order to benefit role performance, the group or the organization”. According to Janssen innovative work behaviour is discretionary and often exceeds the explicit expectations and duties of a particular role. Furthermore, he described it as a coping strategy: When

confronted by a heavy workload, employees either adapt themselves and learn or modify their work context in an innovative way.

For a study of a Dutch industrial organisation, Janssen (2000, 292) developed Scott and Bruce's (1994) innovative behaviour measure devising a scale with 9 self-reported items concerning idea generation, idea promotion and idea realisation:

- Creating new ideas for complex issues
- Looking for new working methods or tools
- Generating novel solutions
- Mobilising support for ideas
- Acquiring approval for ideas
- Convincing important members of the organisation
- Transforming ideas into useful applications
- Introducing ideas into the work environment
- Evaluating the utility of the ideas

In his study, Janssen (2000) combined the answers to the above questions with supervisors' evaluations of the subordinates' innovative behaviour. De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) developed and validated an even more detailed rating scale for supervisors, which illustrates very well the multifaceted nature of innovative behaviour. It complements the list above by several items, such as, contributing to the implementation of ideas; general development effort and paying attention to issues that are not part of daily work. The latter emphasises the extra-role aspect of innovative behaviour, which was also pointed out by Janssen (2000). In other words, engaging in innovative activities is subject to employees' free will.

Prior literature mentions two concepts, which are very close to innovative behaviour. Entrepreneurial behaviour is characterised by risk-taking: It incorporates the idea of potential damage — either to the employer or the employee himself. Entrepreneurial behaviour also includes proactivity. Proactive employees follow closely external trends and events and pioneer new solutions, which may imply taking a strong strategic stance in pursuing new opportunities and identifying threats. (De Jong, Parker, Wennekers, & Wu 2015.) Proactive behaviour is described as self-starting and future-focused where employees initiate change in order to improve performance or work environment (Strauss & Parker 2014).

In their study, De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) also found that their measure of innovative behaviour correlated positively with participative leadership and external work contacts. In other words, higher autonomy and participation in decision making appeared to support innovative behaviour whereas being isolated or surrounded only by colleagues from the same organisation seemed to undermine it.

Altogether, innovative behaviour appears to be very much self-initiated and hard to order or control from outside. It is, therefore, logical to focus hereafter on autonomous motivation. According to Ryan and Deci (2008) autonomous motivation is what drives volitional action and stimulates people's inherent inclination for learning and growth.

3.3 Autonomous Motivation

Self-determination theory (SDT) builds on Porter and Lawler's (1968) distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Action is intrinsically motivated when the person doing it finds it interesting and spontaneously satisfactory. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, involves instrumentality: The satisfaction is derived from the consequences, not the action itself (Gagné & Deci 2005). Behaving in a particular way in order to gain a reward or to avoid a punishment is a classic case of extrinsic motivation whereas intrinsic motivation has typically been associated with a sense of volition and flow (Ryan & Deci 2000).

The basic outlines of SDT are depicted by the self-determination continuum in figure 1. The continuum presents SDT's fundamental division between controlled and autonomous types of motivation. Autonomous motivation comprises of intrinsic motivation and the types of extrinsic motivation in which the underlying values of an action have been accepted and, ideally, internalised as part of one's identity. Controlled motivation, on the other hand, refers to either external regulation by reward and punishment or introjected regulation, in which case people act in order to avoid shame or to gain self-esteem or the approval of others. However, both autonomous and controlled forms of motivation direct and inspire some action. The complete lack of motivation and intention, on the other hand, is labelled amotivation in figure 1. (Deci & Ryan 2008.)

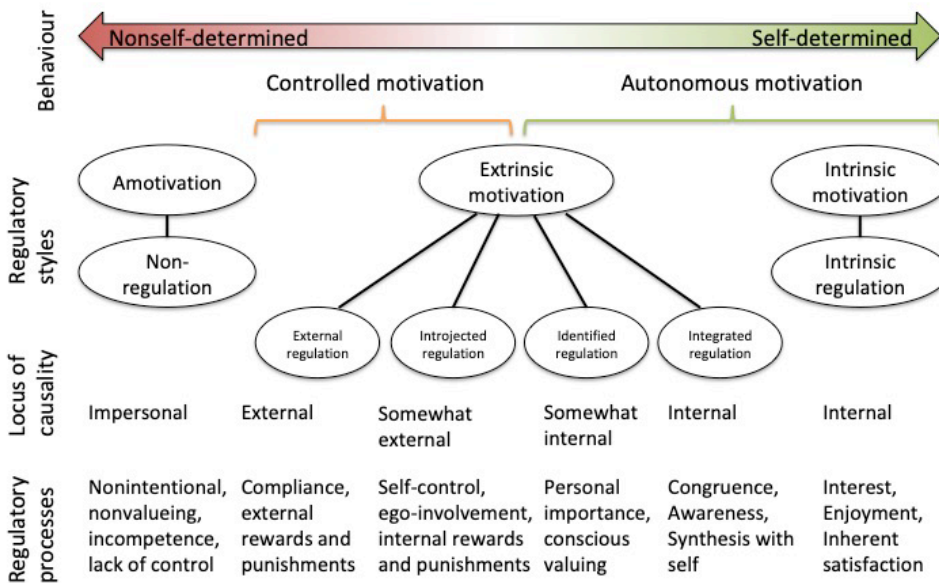


Figure 2: The self-determination continuum (adapted from Gagné & Deci 2005, 336)

Controlled motivation — whether external or introjected in terms of the regulatory style — involves a perceived pressure to think, feel or behave in a particular way (Deci & Ryan 2008). In figure 1, introjected regulation is connected to a somewhat external perceived locus of causality. In other words, the reason for action is based on one's perceptions of external expectations. In contrast, identified regulation implies that the underlying reason is considered personally important and valuable. Finally, a regulation is said to be integrated when it has become fully assimilated to the self. What distinguishes integrated extrinsic motivation from intrinsic, however, is that action is still done in order to attain a separable outcome rather than for the sheer enjoyment of the task itself. (Ryan & Deci 2000.)

Research based on SDT has, in general, indicated that autonomous motivation tends to promote greater psychological health and effective performance in heuristic types of activities such as complex problem solving (Deci & Ryan 2008). Based on both laboratory experiments and field research, Gagné and Deci (2005, 337) argue that intrinsic or fully integrated extrinsic motivation will yield important work outcomes, such as persistent and maintained change, high performance on creative tasks, job-satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviours and psychological adjustment.

In addition to the different types of motivation, the process of internalisation is another essential element of SDT. This is to say that the quality of motivation for a particular action can change as people take in the underlying values, attitudes and regulations. In its fullest form, such progress towards more autonomous motivation is called integration: The regulations connected to certain behaviour are not just accepted, but in harmony with one's other values and needs and thus, integrated into the sense of self. (Ryan & Deci 2000, 71—73.)

Internalisation refers to accepting, adopting and assimilating external values, beliefs and behavioural norms. It is a deeper form of socialisation as internalised regulations guide action even without monitoring or enforcement by others. Furthermore, internalisation is a reflection of personal growth that occurs throughout an individual lifespan. The satisfaction of the basic psychological needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy energises effective internalisation. In other words, people tend to internalise those norms that they associate with basic need satisfaction and disregard the ones that thwart it. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 180—184.)

SDT comprises several subtheories including basic psychological need theory, which suggests that the satisfaction of the universal needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness contribute to the optimal functioning of a human being and facilitate the internalisation of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2017). Research has confirmed that the positive effects of the basic need satisfaction apply across national cultures and diverse contexts, which is why they are called universal (Deci & Ryan 2008, 183).

3.3.1 Autonomous Motivation and Innovative Behaviour

According to Ryan and Deci (2017, 532, 538) work motivation is a complex entity containing both internal and external elements. However, autonomous motivations are crucial for high-quality engagement and performance, especially in tasks requiring heightened effort or creativity. This chapter will discuss previous literature in which self-determination theory has been applied to explain innovative behaviour.

Proactivity has been frequently associated with autonomous motivation. In SDT, proactivity is regarded as an inherent human quality that most people are likely to display in optimal conditions. In fact, the definition of proactivity — being self-directed, innovative and initiating — has a strong resemblance to autonomous motivation. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 540.)

Strauss and Parker (2014, 50) define proactivity as “self-starting and future-focused action that aims to bring about change”. Based on SDT, the researchers examine how different types of motivation drive proactive behaviour. These mechanisms are most probably analogous to the link between autonomous motivation and innovative behaviour, and are, therefore, worth presenting here. According to Strauss and Parker (2014, 53) individuals engage in proactive behaviour if they perceive a reason to do so and find themselves able and energised. The reasons for proactivity can be translated into different forms of motivation.

First of all, proactivity involves a sense of volition and is, therefore, likely to be autonomously motivated. People who relish challenge and change tend to have a strong intrinsic motivation. However, pursuing proactive goals could also include tasks that are

not particularly interesting or enjoyable. Integrated motivation occurs when people, nevertheless, feel that achieving these goals is essential for their long-term life aspirations and expresses their fundamental personal values. In case of identified motivation, people strive for proactive goals because they recognise their value and importance for themselves and for the organisation. Introjected motivation, on the other hand, could be described by a sense of external pressure and guilt when not engaging in proactivity. Finally, motivation for proactive behaviour could be externally regulated in the unlikely case that rewarding was contingent upon it and passivity was punished. (Strauss & Parker 2014, 54—55.)

Along similar lines, Bammens (2016) suggests that different tasks within innovative behaviour are driven by different types of motivation. The creative elements, such as idea generation and problem solving could be intrinsically motivated. As stated by Ryan and Deci (2017, 179) intrinsically motivated people display natural human inclination for learning and growth: they embrace challenge, test limits and assimilate new things. The more complex tasks of innovative behaviour, which could be considered taxing, less enjoyable or even unexciting, are more likely to be linked to identified extrinsic motivation. These could include promoting and validating the idea, organisational politics or highly technical issues. Finally, there are also some very mundane elements within innovative behaviour, such as record keeping, voicing ideas or running routine tests, where the motivation may be introjected by nature. (Bammens 2016, 248—249, 253.)

Devloo, Anseel, De Beuckelaer and Salanova (2015) have studied the effect of basic need satisfaction on innovative behaviour. They discovered that this is a two-way relationship: On one hand, perceived success in innovation activities promoted a sense of competence and on the other hand, perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness encouraged people to try even harder.

According to Devloo et al. (2015, 493—494) basic needs satisfaction is particularly appropriate in explaining innovative behaviour: First, the need for autonomy drives people to challenge the status quo and to initiate change. Second, the need for competence makes them to look for challenge and to explore new ways of working. Third, the need for relatedness implies that they are more likely to engage in innovative behaviour when they feel respected and supported by their colleagues. On the other hand, individuals who lack self-confidence, or fear that they will be judged by their colleagues, are unlikely to engage in innovative behaviour, which is generally considered complex and risky.

3.3.2 *Optimal Conditions for Autonomous Motivation*

According to Ryan and Deci (2017,12) high-quality motivation, healthy development and well-being are enhanced by a social context that supports the satisfaction of basic psychological needs: Autonomy is supported by providing choice and encouraging self-initiation. A sense of competence grows with clear guidelines and expectations and positive informational feedback. Finally, relationally supportive environment communicates the caring involvement of others. In general, research has confirmed that when significant others, such as parents, teachers or supervisors, are autonomy-supportive and positively involved, people are more likely to internalise values, attitudes and behaviours. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 204—206.)

In a work context, it has been demonstrated that when managers support autonomy, employees are able to understand and internalise the value of their contribution. In turn, this leads to better performance and well-being. What's more, the satisfaction of the basic needs has been shown to enhance employee commitment and engagement. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 532.) Such managerial support is characterised by three aspects: First, as managers understand the others' perspectives, they also become more responsive for their needs. Second, managers should concentrate on providing and receiving constructive, informational feedback. Third, subordinates should be offered opportunities for initiatives, choice and participation. (Ryan & Deci 2017, 536—537.)

Strauss and Parker (2014, 59) argue that psychological need satisfaction enhances proactivity. They recommend that managers should design jobs with increased autonomy, provide autonomy support and create a positive work climate in order to sustain proactive behaviour in the long term and to align it with organisational aims and values.

In practice, direct supervisors should acknowledge subordinate's perspective, bring fourth a meaningful rationale and the benefits of the desired behaviour and provide opportunities for choice. In addition, it is important that the managers themselves demonstrate proactive behaviour and act as role models. Motivation for proactivity also depends of the way such managerial expectations are communicated: When employees feel that proactivity is not controlled but guided by a compelling vision for future, they are likely to engage effectively and persistently. (Strauss & Parker 2014, 59—65.)

In a reverse line of thought, Devloo, Anseel, De Beuckelaer and Feys (2016) investigate how innovative behaviour influences the subsequent motivation. They suggest that basic needs are satisfied as individuals seek for novel ways of doing things, implement their own ideas and build networks with key actors. In other words, success in innovation efforts supports internalisation of extrinsic motivation and, hence, generates more innovative behaviour. However, for employees to perceive a sense of purpose and meaning in their endeavours despite failures or negative reactions from others, it is important that there is simultaneously a strong support for innovation in the work environment.

In sum, creating conditions that foster autonomous motivation is about providing choice, voice, and constructive feedback. In addition, employees need to experience equity and inclusion in their work community in order to engage in innovative behaviour which requires proactivity, creativity, problem-solving and extra-role effort. (Janssen, 2000; Ryan & Deci 2017, 536.)

4 PRIOR RESEARCH ON ENCOURAGING INNOVATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Innovation has been a popular research topic for decades, and there is an abundance of studies investigating individual factors, task contexts as well as social contexts that influence individual level innovation (Anderson et al. 2014, 1303—1308). According to Bos-Nehles et al. (2017, 1228), there is a growing amount of evidence that human resource management practices (HR practices) — or bundles of them — foster innovation at the organisational level (Jimenez-Jimenez & Sanz-Valle 2008; Laursen & Foss 2014; Shipton, West, Dawson, Birdi, & Patterson 2006), but detailed knowledge of the practices that promote individual engagement is still scarce. The following is a review of previous research concerning the kind of organisational climate and the practices that enhance abilities, motivation and opportunities for innovative behaviour.

4.1 Innovative Behaviour and Human Resource Management

Several studies have investigated how employees' perceptions of HR practices affect their innovative behaviour (Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees, & Gatenby 2013; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal 2017; Dorenbosch et al., 2005; Walsworth & Verma 2007). Typically, the practices are treated as bundles of practices that have a combined effect on employee performance. This link is often explained by social exchange theory, which argues that as employees feel that the employer values their contribution, they respond with positive attitudes and behaviours. For example, Alfes et al. (2013, 842) found that high-performance work practices created employee engagement that, in turn, stimulated innovative work behaviour.

What's more, self-determination theory has several implications for human resource management that aims at heightened innovative behaviour: Ryan and Deci (2000) emphasise the need to create social-contextual conditions that facilitate autonomous motivation. In addition, job design (Hackman & Oldham 1976) has been considered essential in satisfying the needs of autonomy and competence, which facilitate the integration of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2000, 73—74). The effect of rewards on autonomous motivation has also been high on research agenda (Gagné & Deci 2005, 332—333).

In conclusion, human resource management clearly has a role to play in stimulating innovative behaviour although there are several other factors, such as personality traits, that explain individual differences in innovative behaviour. For example, Wood, Mustafa, Anderson and Sayer (2018) found that among the long-standing members of the organisation, highly conscious employees appeared less innovative in comparison to highly open ones. On the other hand, in comparison to the effects of job characteristics and other

contextual factors, personal traits, such as creative personality, education or tenure, appear to have a weaker and less consistent relationship with innovative behaviour (Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall, & Zhao 2011).

Bos-Nehles, Renkema and Janssen (2017) investigate the best HR practices for supporting innovative work behaviour by the means of a systematic literature review. Their findings are classified according to the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework. The AMO-model proposes that organisational performance is influenced by employees' discretionary effort, which, in turn, depends on the combination of their abilities, motivations and opportunities. (Appelbaum 2000; Macduffie 1995) The following list summarises the themes into which Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) organised their literature review:

- Ability-enhancing HR practices
 - Training and development
- Motivation-enhancing HR practices
 - Rewarding
 - Job security
- Opportunity-enhancing HR practices
 - Autonomy
 - Task composition
 - Feedback
 - Job demands and time pressure

The theoretical argument for applying the AMO-framework for explaining individual performance — in this case, innovative behaviour — rests on Lepak's et al. model (2006, 231), which is presented in figure 3. It suggests that employees interpret the prevailing organisational climate and HRM system in various ways. In the model, organisational climate refers to a general, shared idea of the nature of work climate, while psychological climate is a personal perception, which consequently shapes motivation. In addition, the implemented HR practices influence directly on employees' abilities and opportunities to perform. Taken together, abilities, motivation and opportunities determine individual effort and achievement.

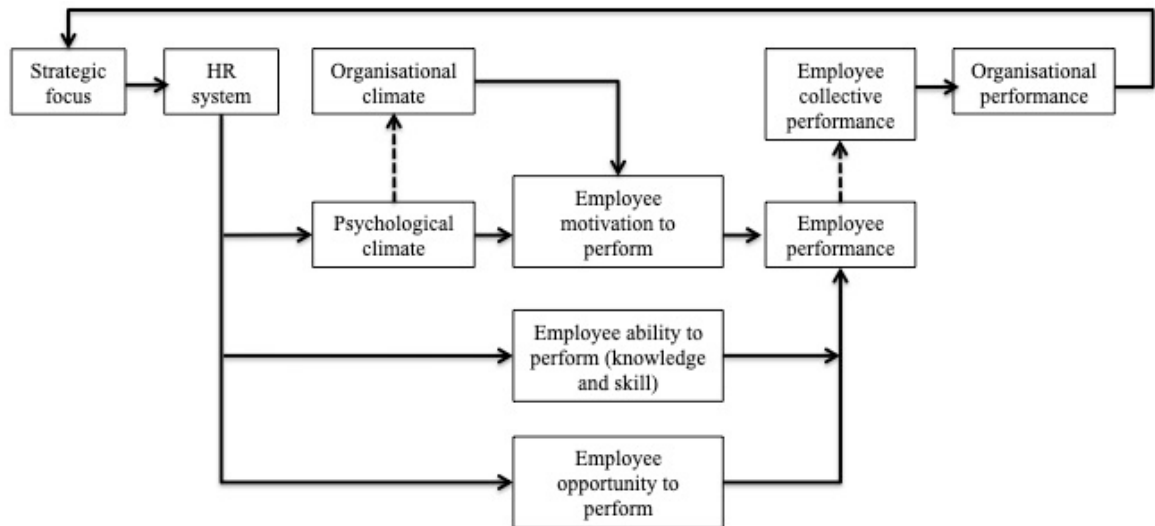


Figure 3: The link between HR system and organisational performance (Lepak et al. 2006, 231)

In the following subchapters, the AMO-framework will be similarly applied to classify extant research findings about the efficacy of different HR practices and policies in supporting employees' innovative behaviour. The characteristics of an organisational climate that foster individual innovativeness will be discussed separately, despite Lepak's et al. (2006) argument that climate only has an indirect effect on innovative behaviour via motivation. This division is considered to deliver a more comprehensive picture of the desired HRM system than concentrating on motivation-enhancing practices only.

What's more, the effects of abilities, motivation and opportunities on innovative behaviour seem to be very much intertwined. For example, the opportunity-enhancing practices in Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) literature review are mainly related to job design whereas in previous studies, job design has been particularly associated with increased motivation (see, for example, Hackman & Oldham 1980; Axtell et al. 2000). It could also be expected that elements of job design, such as task variety or job rotation, would increase employees' knowledge, skills and abilities. According to SDT, a heightened sense of competence will foster autonomous motivation that, in turn, has a positive effect on learning new things. In conclusion, the application of the AMO-framework in this study should not be regarded as a solution to the research problem but as a way to categorise the theoretical and empirical findings.

4.1.1 *Organisational Climate for Innovation*

An organisational climate that promotes innovation has a proven positive effect on organisational performance. It is also evident that this effect is accumulated by individual

innovative behaviour. (Shanker, Bhanugopan, van der Heijden, & Farrell 2017) Ekvall's (1996) original scale is a tested and validated measure for an innovation climate and it has been refined into nine dimensions (Isaksen & Ekvall 2010, 76):

- “Challenge / involvement
- Freedom
- Trust / openness
- Idea-Time
- Playfulness / humour
- Conflict
- Idea support
- Debate
- Risk-taking”

In the above, “conflict” refers, for example, to arguments or gossip and it is regarded as a negative characteristic of a climate. On a contrary, “debate” is considered a positive situation where different viewpoints, experiences and knowledge are listened to and encouraged. These dimensions are, in fact, two distinctive tensions related to organisational climate for innovation. When there is an intellectual tension created by debate, people are keen on presenting their ideas in order to get feedback, and contrasting opinions are shared and discussed. Conflict, on the other hand, is a personal and emotional tension that leads into immature behaviour and power struggles. (Isaksen & Ekvall 2010, 76.)

Shih and Susanto (2017) studied how group dynamics influence innovative behaviour. They discovered that team members displayed more innovative behaviour when they suspected that their personal input could be identified from the group output. In the opposite case, they perceived a shared — rather than personal — responsibility and therefore made less effort. However, once the team members felt trusted by their co-workers, their awareness of shared responsibility had less effect on their innovative behaviour.

Trust, as specified by Isaksen and Ekvall (2010), refers to emotional safety. In such a climate, employees feel comfortable in expressing their ideas and opinions. Likewise, Vanhala and Ritala (2016) demonstrated that trust is an essential mediator in supporting organisational innovativeness with HR practices. However, they propose that building interpersonal trust is not always feasible in global organisations and instead, organisations seeking to enhance their innovativeness should pay more attention to impersonal trust. In their study, impersonal trust is defined as employees' perception of the organisation's trustworthiness. In other words, employees find the HR practices and communication fair and have confidence in the effectiveness of the top management, the sustainability of the organisation and technological reliability.

Employees' perceptions of the HRM system, as a whole, influence their impression of the organisational climate (Lepak et al. 2006, 231). Furthermore, Yuan and Woodman

(2010, 327) propose that this interpretation shapes employees' innovative behaviour as they detect signals about behaviour expectations and potential outcomes for such behaviour. For example, employees could experience organisational support for innovation when they find that, as a norm, change is favoured over tradition or that experimentation is legitimised. In such cases, they are also more likely to believe that innovative behaviour is valuable and will result in higher organisational performance. What's more, employees will engage in innovative behaviour if they assume that it will gain them a positive image among colleagues and that an occasional error, resulting from a trial, will not stain this image, either.

According to Yuan and Woodman (2010), those employees, who regard innovativeness as part of their job requirements — as opposed to extra-role behaviour — tend to find it more appropriate to promote change and new ideas. They are also more likely to trust that their ideas will be considered sound and justified by managers and colleagues. Altogether, perceived expectations and positive consequences enhance innovative behaviour, regardless of whether they are based on an innovation-oriented climate, a favourable supervisor attitude, explicit job requirements or a personal reputation as an innovator. On the other hand, even if the employees assumed that an innovative act would benefit their work, they might still refrain from it if they anticipated a negative effect on their social image.

Abstein and Spieth (2014) discovered that when employees find that the HRM system is designed to promote their well-being at work, it reduces their feelings of a work-life conflict. What's more, such work places were also associated with high levels of innovative behaviour. According to the researchers, a HRM system that fosters innovative behaviour and a better balance between work and private life has four essential characteristics: The individual orientation of the system refers to an appreciation of diversity and a focus on strengths. Discretion orientation has to do with employee involvement and autonomy. Effort orientation means tolerating failures and encouraging a diversity of opinions. Finally, expectancy orientation is demonstrated in offering coaching, feedback and a transparent evaluation and reward system.

Ostergaard, Timmermans and Kristinsson (2011) studied the relationship between workforce diversity and performance. Their results indicated that diversity in education and gender increased the likelihood of innovation. Surprisingly, age diversity had a negative effect and diverse cultural backgrounds had no particular effect on innovation performance. However, an organisational culture that favoured diversity in general seemed to support innovations.

Although workforce diversity guarantees a wide range of knowledge, abilities and perspectives, employees will only deploy their individual strengths if it is clearly signalled that these differences are, in deed, valued. What's more, when employees are encouraged

to apply their personal strengths, they gain positive performance experiences, which enhances their self-efficacy and, hence, the likelihood of pursuing challenging, non-routine tasks in the future. (Abstein & Spieth 2014, 216—217.)

Abstein and Spieth (2014, 217—218) found that an HRM system designed to support innovative behaviour is characterised by a simultaneous experience of responsibility and freedom. However, employees' sense of discretion is lowered when there is an old-fashioned attitude linking physical presence to high performance, for example, only regarding full-time employees as top performers.

In addition, Abstein and Spieth (2014, 218—219) stress that, in order to encourage innovative behaviour, the HRM system should emphasise effort and engagement rather than success. This is a signal that experiments are encouraged, failures are tolerated and that constructive controversy is, in fact, an essential part of the idea process. Finally, the researchers point out that the performance expectations related to innovative behaviour need to be complemented by consistent HR practices, such as ample support, recognition and feedback. What's more, evaluating and rewarding creativity disseminates a positive attitude for trials and experiments.

In sum, an organisational climate that supports innovative behaviour is characterised by involvement, freedom, constructive controversy and trust. In addition, the managerial expectations and positive outcomes related to innovative behaviour should be communicated to employees at every turn. Employees will also identify signals of the desired behaviour in the organisation's HRM system. In that light, an HRM system that stimulates innovative behaviour favours a diversity of people, career paths and opinions. It is typified by autonomy and employee involvement and it rewards for engagement, not just successful innovations. What's more, clearly defined expectations are matched by coaching, recognition and feedback.

4.1.2 *Abilities in Innovative Behaviour*

At the organisational level, there is a demonstrated link between high quality human resource management and innovation performance. This has been explained by the mediating mechanisms of knowledge management capacity (Chen & Huang 2009) and absorptive capacity (Chang, Gong, Way, & Jia 2013). There is, however, less knowledge about the HR practices that enhance individual innovation abilities. Although employee training and development has been considered an important means for supporting individual innovative behaviour (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017), HRM literature offers little exact advice about the content of such training.

For Prieto and Pérez-Santana (2014, 200), effective training for innovative behaviour emphasises teamwork and creative work skills. Interestingly, they suggest that the existence of training opportunities also increases confidence in colleagues' abilities, which contributes to a fertile organisational climate. What's more, training often implies a great deal of employee participation, which is likely to draw attention to co-operative rather than individualistic behaviours.

Chen and Huang (2009) argue that strategic human resource practices enhance organisation's innovation performance through improved knowledge management capacity. In their study, strategic HR practices are defined as staffing, training, participation, performance appraisal and compensation. These practices can be designed in a way that increases knowledge acquisition, sharing and application, which, in turn contributes to the organisation's innovative performance. Chen and Huang's findings suggest that sharing and applying the knowledge and expertise, which has formerly resided in individual employees' minds only, can accelerate the generation of product, service and process innovations.

Along similar vein, Chang et al. (2013) concentrate on the mediating effect of absorptive capacity, which refers to the organisation's ability to recognise, assimilate and exploit new and external knowledge. In order to improve the organisation's market responsiveness and innovativeness they propose a HR system that is flexible in terms of both resources and coordination. This implies recruiting and developing employees for many alternative tasks and implementing these shifts quickly and effectively as the competitive environment changes. According to Chang et al., job rotation, multi-skill selection, training and broadly designed jobs enhance employees' abilities in acquiring, sharing and exploiting knowledge.

In terms of HR practices that enhance the abilities in innovative behaviour, Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) discovered that training and development had a positive and direct effect on innovative behaviour in all the reviewed studies. According to the researchers, training and development stimulates innovative behaviour in two ways: On one hand, employees have more knowledge, skills and abilities to contribute. On the other hand, training and development is considered a demonstration of employer's good will and employees feel compelled to reciprocate through positive attitudes and extra effort.

According to Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2017), the HR practices of an organisation signal the employees what kind of behaviour is expected, supported and rewarded. The way individuals interpret these messages constitutes their perception of organisational climate. Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal discovered that if employees find supervisors supportive and feel that information is shared with them, they reciprocate with innovative behaviour. When the organisational climate is considered innovation supporting, training has less effect but the perception of information sharing is even more important in stimulating innovative behaviour.

Walsworth and Verma (2007) found that as companies become more engaged internationally, they are more likely to adopt an innovation strategy supported by more sophisticated HR practices. These are typically characterised by greater task variety, employee participation and non-traditional compensation systems. According to Walsworth and Verma, especially conceptual training, which concerned issues such as leadership, group problem solving, team building, communication and professional development, seemed to increase innovation activity. In another study, training was positively related to all kinds of innovation whereas performance appraisal appeared to support administrative innovations in particular. In addition, training enhanced knowledge management effectiveness, which seemed to mediate the positive effects. (Tan & Nasurdin 2011.)

Scott and Bruce (1994, 587, 601) investigated the effect of personal problem solving style on innovative behaviour. They found that a systematic style, as opposed to an intuitive one, did not seem to produce as many new ideas. However, they did emphasise that a more systematic approach, involving routines, discipline, rationality and logic, is very likely required in the latter stages of innovative behaviour and successful individuals are able to apply both styles in problem-solving.

In conclusion, knowledge sharing practices, such as cross-unit committees or communities of practice, contribute to idea generation (Chen & Huang 2009). Communities of practice refer to informal networks, which are formed around employees' special interests or expertise within a multinational organisation (Evans 2011, 400—402). In addition, job rotation and broadly designed, multi-skilled jobs foster organisational learning, which will bear fruit in absorptive capacity and innovativeness (Chang et al. 2013). Training in professional skills also enhances innovative behaviour, but the effect could result from heightened self-confidence as will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.1.3 *Motivation for Innovative Behaviour*

Creative and innovative behaviour most often imply remarkable challenges, which draws attention to the motivation that drives it. In their study, Hammond et al. (Hammond et al. 2011) identified a direct link between intrinsic motivation and innovative behaviour. However, according to Ryan and Deci (2000), the quality of motivation varies both within and between people, across situations, roles, domains and cultures. As discussed earlier, there is a reason to suspect that innovative behaviour is not intrinsically motivated in all instances (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017, 1234). In fact, the variance in the quality of motivation, as defined by self-determination theory, could explain the varied and often contradictory research outcomes related to motivation and innovative behaviour.

Hammond et al. (2011) argue that intrinsic motivation for innovative behaviour is enhanced by a sense of self-efficacy. This belief in one's competence can, however, be related to either task performance or creative performance. Their results displayed a somewhat stronger relationship with creative self-efficacy and innovative behaviour. Earlier, Axtell, Holman, Unsworth, Wall and Waterson et al. (2000) found that self-efficacy and production ownership were associated with idea suggestion in particular. In their study, self-efficacy was related to job breadth: the confidence in performing tasks that extend beyond the prescribed job requirements. Production ownership, on the other hand, referred to a concern for workplace problems as opposed to ignoring them because they are somebody else's responsibility.

Yuan and Woodman (2010, 335) studied how employees' innovative behaviour is influenced by their expectations of the performance and image outcomes of such behaviour. They discovered that employees engaged in innovative activities when they thought that it would have a positive effect on their job performance. Contrary to the hypothesis, the expected image gains seemed to have a negative effect on actual innovative behaviour as rated by the supervisor. The researchers suggest that this could be because the managers disapproved such false motives. Nevertheless, Yuan and Woodman introduce an important social-political perspective: Individual innovative behaviour could be shaped by other people's anticipated reactions.

Devloo et al. (2016, 2015) provide some evidence that innovative behaviour can itself be a motivating or a demotivating force. Once the members of the studied group — students at an innovation boot camp — felt they had succeeded and received support for innovation, they displayed higher basic need satisfaction the next day and consequently, stronger intrinsic motivation. By contrast, if the students were engaged in innovation activities without success or support, their motivation appeared to fade. According to Devloo et al., managerial support and interventions are therefore necessary in order to sustain innovative behaviour for longer periods.

In sum, motivation for innovative behaviour appears to be a complex construct that is affected by multiple factors. Especially when the motivation is expected to be of an intrinsic or autonomous nature, self-efficacy, empowerment, positive performance expectations, previous success and continuous support are often mentioned. Interestingly, all these factors are somehow related to the basic need for competence as defined by self-determination theory earlier in this report. The remainder of the chapter will focus on compensation, which is most often connected to extrinsic motivation.

With regard to motivation-enhancing HR practices, the literature tends concentrate on rewards, but there is no consensus about their effect on innovative behaviour. In the Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) literature review, most of the studies presented a negative connection between rewards and innovative behaviour. The rare opposite evidence was explained by effort-reward fairness (Janssen 2000) or a psychological contract (Ramamoorthy et al.

2005). In other words, employees behave innovatively when they feel fairly rewarded and, therefore, obliged to do their best.

Nevertheless, there is a clear need to acknowledge and reward innovative behaviour (Hammond et al. 2011; Scott & Bruce 1994). Janssen (2000) found that employees responded more innovatively to higher job demands, such as time pressure and work load, provided that they felt fairly rewarded by the organisation. Furthermore, Zhang and Begley (2011) discovered that extra-role behaviour, such as innovative behaviour, was only valued among employees if it was officially recognised by the compensation system.

By contrast, Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2017) found that the perception of a fair compensation had little effect on innovative behaviour. In studying company-level innovation, Curran and Walsworth (2014) discovered likewise that fixed salary or individual performance pay appeared to have no effect. However, they did discover that generous employee benefits were associated with higher levels of innovation. Based on their results, they propose rewarding innovative performance at group level rather than individually and paying attention to intangible or indirect rewards.

Prieto and Pérez-Santana (2014, 201) found that, in general, HR practices aimed at enhancing abilities and opportunities had more effect on innovative behaviour than the practices connected to motivation. In their study, the latter referred to compensation and incentive systems and performance appraisal and yielded non-significant results in relation to innovative behaviour. This finding together with previous literature leads the researchers to recommend collective rewards and informal and developmental, rather than judgemental or controlling, feedback.

The effect of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation has sparked a long-lasting debate among researchers (see, for example, Deci & Koestner 1999b). At first, it was suggested that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are additive and managers should aim at supporting both. Enlarging jobs was considered intrinsically rewarding and performance contingent pay was recommended to boost extrinsic motivation. (Gagné & Deci 2005.) However, the emergence of Cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan 1985) and the following empirical research suggested that extrinsic rewards have a negative effect on intrinsic motivation. Finally, a meta-analysis confirmed that positive feedback clearly enhances intrinsic motivation whereas tangible rewards undermine it (Deci & Koestner 1999a).

Researchers have, however, suggested several ways of rewarding employees without detrimental effects on intrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci 2005, 332—333). First, a regular salary or an unexpected bonus do not seem to affect motivation in any way (Deci & Koestner 1999a). Second, with regard to performance-contingent pay, Gagné and Deci (2005, 353—354) stress the importance of an autonomy-supportive climate and feedback.

Controlling elements such as competition among team members or pressure to reach numeric targets are not recommended by them. Furthermore, the incentive program needs to be considered equitable by the employees.

In sum, rewarding has been widely researched as a motivator for innovative behaviour (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017, 1233). Yet, there are few studies that have demonstrated a positive linkage (Ramamoorthy, Flood, Slattery, & Sardesai 2005). More often, monetary rewards have been found to have a non-significant (Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014) or even a negative effect (Sanders et al. 2010). Therefore, it seems justified to turn away from extrinsic motivators in the remainder of this study and to concentrate instead on those HR practices, such as managerial support and feedback, that encourage autonomous motivation as specified in chapter 3.3.2.

4.1.4 Opportunities for Innovative Behaviour

The Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) literature review confirms that autonomy, defined as a perceived freedom to decide over work methods, undoubtedly increases innovative behaviour. Other job design variables, such as variety and challenge (Noefer, Stegmaier, Molter, & Sonntag 2009) as well as flexibility (Dorenbosch et al. 2005), have also been at the focus of the research concerning opportunities for innovative behaviour. In addition, Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) concluded that feedback has been recognised as an important influencing factor although there are few studies investigating the direct link between feedback and innovative behaviour. What's more, several researchers have discussed whether job demands and stressors undermine or, in certain conditions, enhance innovative behaviour (De Spiegelare et al. 2012; Dediu et al. 2018; Janssen 2000; Ren & Zhang 2015).

In a Europe-wide study, the job design variables of autonomy, manager encouragement and dealing with unforeseen problems were associated with high levels of idea generation and implementation. On the other hand, monotonous tasks appeared to undermine innovative behaviour. Based on their study, Dediu et al. (2018) argue that job design that introduces more complexity and autonomy is an effective way to enable creativity and innovation. In addition, this expected behaviour should be clearly communicated and encouraged. (Dediu et al. 2018.)

Shanker et al. (2017, 74) remind that as employees experience support for innovative behaviour and act accordingly, the perception is often based on their immediate work environment. This notion is further supported by Prieto and Pérez-Santana's (2014) finding that management support and co-workers' support mediate the positive effect that high-involvement HR practices can have on innovative behaviour. In other words, when managers do apply these practices in every-day life by providing positive feedback and

opportunities for participation and professional development, employees perceive support for innovative behaviour. Their sense of support is further increased if co-workers are found trustworthy and collaborative.

Likewise, in a survey among non-managerial knowledge workers, Sanders et al. (2010) found that high-quality exchanges between employees and their leaders supported innovative behaviour. The effect was further strengthened by subordinate's satisfaction with HR practices. Especially satisfaction with influence and work content were often associated with innovative behaviour. Influence was measured in terms of voice and participation in decision-making.

In conclusion, the supervisors play a crucial role in encouraging innovative behaviour. Yuan and Woodman (2010, 328) explain that when there is a close relationship with supervisor, the employee does not perceive a great image risk even if an innovative attempt should fail. In addition, the supervisor's trust and support is often manifested in greater resources, autonomy and decision-making opportunities. This, in turn, will enhance the employee's confidence in succeeding.

Furthermore, Schuh, Zhang, Morgeson, Tian and van Dick (2018) examined how employees' innovative behaviour was reflected in their appraisals. The results confirmed that the quality of the relationship between supervisor and subordinate can moderate the supervisor evaluations: As innovative behaviour is often ambiguous — innovative employees may, for example, surf the internet or spend time talking to colleagues — supervisors tend to interpret it in a more favourable way if their relationship with the employee is characterised by mutual trust, support and loyalty. On the other hand, if the relationship is rather distant, similar kind of behaviour might not be considered innovative, even if the employee and his colleagues regard him as an innovative person.

In addition to autonomy and managerial support, complex and challenging tasks are also expected to encourage motivation. When people find the task interesting and challenging they are, by definition, intrinsically motivated. On the other hand, according to self-determination theory, autonomous extrinsic motivation builds on the perceived importance of the task rather than its inherent appeal. When it comes to job design, both types of autonomous motivation could be achieved simultaneously by vertical and horizontal job enlargement. (Gagné & Deci 2005, 348,353, 355.)

According to de Spiegelare et al. (2012) white-collar employees in particular seemed to consider varied jobs more stimulating. Variety and challenge are also said to enhance the opportunity for innovative behaviour because, once engaged in complex tasks, people build up skills and knowledge that help them in idea generation (Noefer et al. 2009). However, extant research has not been able to confirm that assumption. What has been demonstrated, is that routine tasks have an undermining effect on innovative behaviour (De Jong et al 2015).

Dorenbosch et al. (2005) speak for a more flexible job design in supporting innovative behaviour among employees in administrative, knowledge-intensive professions. They define flexibility in terms of multi-functionality — a diverse set of tasks within one job — and redundancy, which refers to familiarity with colleagues' jobs and the ability to cover for them. Dorenbosch et al. conclude that a flexible job design strengthens production ownership, which refers to a strong concern for work-related matters. Together with a commitment-oriented HRM system they increase both idea generation and implementation. This finding is very much in line with an earlier study among manufacturing workers. In it, job autonomy, confidence in performing extra-role tasks and production ownership were associated with an increased number of employee suggestions. However, regardless of these individual factors, in the absence of managerial support, there were less suggestions and a smaller proportion of them were eventually implemented. (Axtell et al. 2000.)

In terms of work organisation, Büschgens et al. (2013, 143) suggest that radical idea generation should be allocated for permanent work groups and the implementation of those innovations for cross-functional project teams. They assume that in permanent work groups, employees have more task autonomy, which is proven to stimulate creativity. These groups co-act, rather than co-operate intensively, and their tasks are not excessively interdependent. Altogether, the way of organising generates low social cohesion, whereas in project teams, the members build up high cohesion and consequently, tend to comply to group norms. This is likely to lead into group think, shared stereotypes and self-censorship, which undermine creativity and critical thinking, but enable swift and determined implementation of radical ideas.

According to the extant literature, job demands seem to have a mixed effect on innovative behaviour (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017). Interestingly, De Spiegelaere et al. (2012) found that insecurity over job content increased white-collar innovative behaviour, whereas it appeared to have an adverse effect in blue-collar work. In their study, time pressure or emotional pressure did not seem to have any effect. Later, Dediu et al (2018) have specified that while working on tight deadlines seems to slightly enhance idea generation, working at high speed has a negative effect at the implementation phase. Increasing job resources, on the other hand, has been found very effective: According to De Spiegelaere et al. (2012) opportunities to organise tasks and to use and develop professional skills are particularly important in supporting white-collar IWB.

Ren and Zhang (2015) divided job demands into challenges and hindrances. Challenges, such as urgency, responsibility and heavy workload, were in general regarded as opportunities for growth, learning and achievement. On the other hand, organisational politics, role ambiguity and job insecurity were identified as hindrances, which were deemed to undermine such opportunities. The researchers evidenced that the challenges, in deed, enhanced idea generation and the hindrances had an opposite effect. What's

more, in case there were plenty of hindrances, even a supportive organisational climate could not spark up innovative behaviour.

In summary, researchers have demonstrated that job autonomy, challenge, involvement and participation in decision-making all generate opportunities for innovative behaviour. There is also some evidence that task variety has a positive effect, especially in reference to job complexity (Noefer et al. 2009, 390). Although jobs can be redesigned in that direction at the organisational level, direct supervisors have a critical role in creating an experience of autonomy and support within their team. Most importantly, managerial support is manifested in developmental feedback that focuses on recognition and learning rather than judgement or comparisons (Büschgens et al. 2013, 141—142).

Moving on to discuss the results of this study, the findings of prior research will be used to draw comparisons and conclusions. While the preceding review provided theoretical and generalizable knowledge about encouraging innovative behaviour, the following pages will describe the practical understanding, impressions and further questions that rose from doing background research in the field. Subsequently, this theoretical and practical insight guided the design of the rest of the study and was continuously applied to reflect upon the findings.

5 RESULTS ON WHITE-COLLAR INNOVATIVE BEHAVIOUR

The empirical part of this research had two distinct phases, which is why the results will be, likewise, presented in two parts in the following. In the beginning of the field research, it was essential to get to know the context: The organisational objectives related to innovation, the way these expectations were communicated, the general level of innovative behaviour within white-collar employees and the nature of the ideas they had presented. During the second phase, a more in-depth approach was adopted in order to gain an understanding of white-collar employees' perceptions about the current organisational climate and the abilities, the motivation and the opportunities that would help them to act in an innovative way.

5.1 First Phase: Understanding the Context

The findings and impressions of the empirical background research will be presented in the following. The objective was to build a comprehensive picture of white-collar ideas: the origin, the topics, the quantity and the quality of them. As a result of the first phase, the initial focus on motivation started to appear too narrow and a wider framework (Lepak et al. 2006), which also includes the climate, the abilities and the opportunities that drive innovative behaviour, was selected for presenting and analysing the results in the follow-up.

The background interviews were conducted with people who were either directly involved in idea management or else how in a position where they would come across white-collar ideas, for example, working in business or product development. Although they proposed some criticism and several challenges in the existing idea management processes, these managers and system developers still represented the employer perspective on innovative behaviour. At the same time, the informal discussions and observations indicated that such a perspective should be complemented and contrasted by other white-collar employees in the second phase of research in order to create a more complete picture of the phenomenon.

In fact, the explorative nature of the background interviews and observations yielded more questions than answers: Is there a great number of far-reaching white-collar ideas that are promoted informally and therefore not known of? Are good ideas perhaps left unspoken because implementing the change would cause too much trouble for the idea generator himself? How is continuous improvement manifested in white-collar work? How do the colleagues perceive extra-role innovative behaviour? Are there significant

differences in innovative behaviour between the company locations? Ultimately, these reflections guided the design of the in-depth interviews.

5.1.1 Nature of White-collar Ideas

This chapter discusses the insights that emerged from the background interviews. During this initial stage of the research, no attempt was made to focus on a particular type of white-collar ideas. The employee suggestions or ideas that were mentioned in the background interviews concerned incremental process or product improvements. Not even those interviewees who had a long experience working at either Hansa GmbH or Oras Oy could recollect a radical innovation that would have stemmed from a single white-collar initiative.

Incremental improvements of existing products and processes, by contrast, were considered a very likely white-collar contribution by the background interviewees. While they expressed great confidence in the expertise and knowledge of the group white-collar employees, they, nevertheless, agreed that this seldom materialises into formal initiatives. In the formal idea management system (IMS), employees are not rewarded for proposing small improvements that they could implement themselves. As a consequence, white-collar employees are unlikely to formally submit ideas that concern their own tasks and responsibilities. Altogether, it appears that continuous improvement is a desired behaviour, conducted by some active employees, but not adopted as a fundamental part of the white-collar work.

In the past, business development projects at Oras Group have mainly been initiated by the management. According to the business development manager, one exception was the launch of a customer relationship management system two years ago, which was requested by the sales personnel. Furthermore, the implementation of this novel system appeared to spark a great deal of innovative behaviour since there was no previous model that could have been copied. As for incremental development, the business development manager had witnessed many improvement proposals from the white-collar employees, but confirmed that such ideas would not be submitted into the IMS as they are quicker and easier to execute by oneself.

The category managers, who liaise between customer segments, sales and new product development, suggested that product-related ideas should be better prepared before they are evaluated at the so-called opportunity day. It is a quarterly occasion, in which both external and internal ideas are assessed by the product and portfolio management and several other experts from the company. Some of the ideas are then selected to be turned into new product development projects. In order to make an informed decision, the review board would need a business plan where the customer need and the proposed solution

were more thoroughly analysed. This level of preparation, for its part, would require a lot more co-operation between functions than is currently occurring before the opportunity day. From the category management point of view, the IMS ideas that end up in the opportunity day are too often generated in isolation. What's more, they tend to suggest little more than a new feature for an existing product with no commercial potential.

As for the sales teams, who often express their ideas to the category managers informally without using the IMS, they are likely to propose new products that would supplement the existing offering but yield little competitive advantage in terms of differentiation from the competitors. These kind of ideas do not support gaining a leading position in the market. In addition, the category managers emphasised the importance of improving the sales concepts and methods of the existing product portfolio: There appears to be an abundance of product-related ideas and only few ideas concerning process improvements at the customer frontline.

The manager of the research and development (R&D) department in Finland commented on the quality of the IMS ideas, saying that there are, however, established procedures for refining ideas. He stated that the experts of the portfolio and category management and product development should be more than capable of identifying potential ideas, even at their initial stage.

What's more, some issues concerning the different subcultures of the group were also brought up in the background interviews. Two interviewees working at the Stuttgart office shared similar perceptions about the possible barriers for expressing an idea. They assumed that the IMS has been welcomed in the German organisation because it is considered a neutral channel for ideas — especially if the ideas challenge the conventional working methods or the opinions of the direct supervisor. Also in the informal discussions at this stage, a point was raised that the IMS guarantees a fair handling process that is not affected by organisational politics (Diary 22.10.2018). On the other hand, the Finnish background interviewees perceived a lower sense of hierarchy at the Rauma office. They assumed that the Finnish white-collar employees would feel freer to discuss about their ideas with the top management than their German colleagues.

There is a risk of a conflict if an improvement idea concerns a task that is somebody else's responsibility. The background interviewees presumed that this prevents some people from submitting ideas. However, in the current system, ideas concerning a larger unit than one's immediate work environment are, in fact, hoped and rewarded for. As Janssen (2000) defined, innovative behaviour may imply acting over and above the duties of a particular job. This raises a question whether the kind of extra-role behaviour that is needed for preparing and promoting an initiative is generally accepted and encouraged within the Oras Group.

5.1.2 *Expectations and Conditions for Idea Generation*

In addition to the background interviews, the first phase of the field research also involved the analysis of documents and other material from the target organisation. The reason for it was, first and foremost, to gain an understanding of the managerial expectations related to innovative behaviour. Secondly, the research interest was on the style of communication: the clarity and the explicitness of the message and the manner in which the value and importance of innovative behaviour was presented. This followed Strauss and Parker's (2014, 65) argument that the manner of communication determines whether employees' action is driven by controlled or autonomous motivation. Thirdly, the employee survey results were examined to construct a general idea of how white-collar employees evaluate the current conditions and opportunities for innovative behaviour.

The interest in managerial expectations can be justified by previous research: According to Yuan and Woodman (2010, 337), for employees without any explicit innovation requirement in the job description, the strategic objectives linked to innovation may appear rather distant or irrelevant. The researchers recommend challenging the conventional job roles and communicating that every employee is expected to contribute new ideas. Likewise, Shin et al. (2017) discovered that innovative behaviour was increased if employees perceived that innovation was required at their work role and that it was essential considering either personal or organisational success. The effect was particularly strong when the employees did not have an intrinsic interest in innovation.

At first, explicit innovation requirements were searched for in the company documents. The Oras Group business strategy has several indirect referrals to innovation: First, the vision statement mentions "advanced sanitary fittings", which could be connected to radical product innovations. Second, "solid foundations" on the target list could refer to incremental administrative or process innovations. Third, the post-merger integration still requires many changes in the company culture and in the established ways of working. As for the human resource management strategy, idea management is not mentioned apart from the need to "provide an innovative, motivating and safe working environment" (Oras Group, People strategy).

It is evident that reaching the objectives named in the official company documents requires individual innovative behaviour. However, explicit expectations were not found in these general statements. The formal idea management system, on the other hand, has an opening statement that emphasises that it is intended for all employees and its aim is "to gather together and utilize the creativity, expertise and the competence that exists within the workplace". Altogether, the idea management system is well publicised and easily accessed, but to make a connection between individual innovative behaviour and the business strategy requires some imagination. The value or expectations related to such effort are not very obvious.

In addition to communication, training has been identified as a means to influence employees' innovative behaviour (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017, 1232). Based on that, some of the Oras Group e-learning modules were examined in order to identify guidelines and instructions aimed at encouraging innovative behaviour.

Out of the four training modules that concentrated on organisational behaviour, the one concerning the organisational value of courage was considered most relevant for this study. It handled issues such as constructive criticism, experimenting and assessing opportunities. There were, however, two minor points that were in conflict with supporting innovative behaviour. First, assessing opportunities also implied "minimizing failures". Second, another module was titled "Whatever I do, I do it well." Both quotes created an impression that a trial-and-error –approach is not encouraged. Altogether, the organisational behaviour training material appeared to signal expectations and support for innovative behaviour by emphasising trust, open communication and active development but not so much playfulness or risk-taking as outlined by Isaksen and Ekvall (2010).

As for leadership training, the research interest was in finding out whether the managers could be expected to know how to encourage ideas from their team. When dealing with supporting motivation, the materials were very much in line with self-determination theory. Being motivated was said to consist of significance, influencing, competence and self-determination, which is very much the same as delivering a sense of competence and autonomy as defined by Devloo et al. (2015, 493). As a final, slightly negative remark, it remains to be said that while the organisational behaviour and leadership modules provided plenty of support for innovative behaviour in terms of values and attitudes, the e-learning platform contained very little material about practical ideation methods or developing subordinates' creative skills.

As well as the training material, the performance appraisal at Oras Group included some topics related to innovative behaviour. The first of them inquires about proactivity, development and influencing and, for its part, highlights the importance of such behaviour as a member of Oras Group. In addition, supervisors are asked to reflect whether they challenge the current way of working. One of the statements is: "I know how to fuel and foster innovation". The most relevant topic from the studied perspective is simply titled "innovation". These statements are, again, addressed to all employees regardless of their position:

"Innovation

1. *I actively present ideas to support the business*
2. *I continuously present ideas to find new effective ways of working*
3. *I regularly discuss with people outside my own department or our company to increase my knowhow"*

(Oras Group, personal development discussion form)

In conclusion, employees are requested to reflect on their innovative behaviour at least once a year with their supervisor, which is in accordance with Schuh's et al. (2018, 405) recommendation. However, the researchers remind that innovative behaviour involves several stages and a diverse set of tasks, and it is important to consider each of them in the appraisal. The development discussion quoted above emphasises idea generation and pays little attention to the latter stages of innovative behaviour, which could disregard and, consequently, demotivate those who, for example, excel at the implementation stage.

The results of an annual employee survey show that the managerial and organisational support for innovation detailed above is also reflected in positive employee perceptions. In 2018, many factors related to idea management were rated by the white-collar employees clearly above the international benchmark and as a rule, slightly higher than the blue-collar employees. These included possibilities to participate and suggest, supervisor's interest in ideas and acknowledgement of good work. The white-collar employees also experienced freedom to express disagreements and a good flow of information within their teams. It can be concluded that, in average, white-collar employees seemed to perceive good opportunities for idea suggestion.

Comparing the 2017 and 2018 employee survey results, it seems that white-collar employees recognised a slight improvement in co-operation between departments, feedback, acknowledgement and participation possibilities, which are all relevant prerequisites of innovative behaviour. They also perceived that access to relevant information was a little easier than previous year. What's more, white-collar respondents reported to be very aware of the company values and objectives and felt that they were worth striving for.

Comparing the 2018 white-collar survey results between Finland, Germany, Czech Republic and Poland yields little additional information. The ratings only varied a little between the countries and, as mentioned before, they were predominantly above the international benchmark. An interesting remark, however, is that the best ratings for the selected items were given, as a rule, in either Germany or Czech Republic. This could be explained by the fact that, at the time of the survey, the new company-wide idea management system had just replaced local systems that had been considered somewhat ineffective and out-of date (Huunonen, discussion 7.3. 2019). The poorest estimates, on the other hand, were more evenly scattered among the countries.

Despite these positive attitudes and perceptions, white-collar employees have only submitted a handful of initiatives or future potentials into the IMS database. Focusing on these wider idea types (ie. excluding safety proposals, improvement suggestions and patented inventions) Finnish, Czech and Polish white-collar employees filed in less than 0,1 ideas per head in 2018. The Stuttgart office stands out with almost 0,2 initiatives by each white-collar employee since the launch of the system in 2017. In other words, every fifth employee has submitted an initiative, which is in line with the positive employee survey

responses by the German white-collar employees. Nevertheless, the general conclusion is that white-collar employees do not use the official suggestion system as actively as the blue-collar employees.

5.2 Second Phase: Focusing on Employee Perceptions

During the background interviews it became evident that motivation alone does not explain the modest level of innovative behaviour among white-collar employees. In the above summary, the factors that seemed to undermine innovative behaviour were mainly related to two themes: the quality of the ideas and the barriers for expressing and promoting ideas. This led into thinking that innovative behaviour requires certain abilities and opportunities as well as motivation and their combination drives individual behaviour. This perspective was supported by the studies of Prieto and Perez-Santana (2014) and Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) who have also classified the determinants of innovative behaviour into abilities, motivation and opportunities.

On the basis of the previous research on innovative behaviour reviewed in chapter 4, it is justified to believe that, in general, individual innovative behaviour can be supported by enhancing employees' knowledge management abilities and autonomous motivation and by providing opportunities to perform through the means of job design. These presumptions, broken into smaller influencing factors, such as new knowledge acquisition, sense of competence or task autonomy, were then tested in in-depth interviews.

5.2.1 Employees' Definition of Innovative Behaviour

As discussed before, innovative behaviour is very ambiguous (Schuh et al. 2018, 401) and difficult to define explicitly. The interviewees were not presented with the academic definition, but allowed to construct their own meaning for the concept. This exploratory approach yielded a broad range of behaviours and attitudes that were considered innovative: The interviewees spoke about networking, updating their knowledge, identifying challenges and provoking debate as well as participating in development projects and submitting formal initiatives.

As expected, white-collar employees find it difficult to distinguish innovative behaviour. For most interviewees, development is a natural part of work — to a point that they don't consider it anything special:

“Then, on the other hand, at least I, myself, feel that my role is to develop new things, so to draw a line: at which point are we talking about creative

and innovative behaviour and at which point just so-called normal development?”

(Interview B 5)

“But maybe a typical white-collar answer would be: If the task can be dealt with immediately, what is the added value in filing it in so that others can see it?”

(Interview B 4)

From these kind of comments, it can be concluded that the interviewees do not seem to think that their proactivity is, in fact, exemplary behaviour that ought to be made visible in order to encourage it across the company. The latter proposal follows Strauss and Parker (2014, 62) who suggested that proactivity induces more proactivity in an upward positive spiral. Likewise, Abstein and Spieth (2014, 222) emphasised the importance of signalling that the employer values innovative engagement.

On the other hand, white-collar employees appeared to have very high criteria for expressing their ideas, which could explain that there appeared to be a modest amount of them — at least in the official database. According to the interviewees, an idea has to propose a clear improvement to the current state of the matters. Many of them also expected convincing evidence before they would themselves approve a suggested change.

“Because new things, when you change things...it’s very bad if it’s only little worse than before. Then the people don’t like the system at all, because before it was working better. If you change something it has to be clear improvement, not just change for the reason itself.”

(Interview B 2)

“Sometimes an idea without any solution, that you only describe the problem, is not an idea. It’s just complaining. It must be somehow possible to solve that. I think so, that it must be — not only that you find something — but you also got some idea how to follow and how to solve that.”

(Interview B 16)

A strongly reserved attitude for new ideas, as reflected in the first quote, could also imply that some promising ideas are not brought forward because of self-censorship. The latter comment represents a gentler, yet critical assessment of ideas, which was typical to the interviewees.

In some occasions, white-collar employees also found it difficult to distinguish between the ideas that are a part of their job role and the kind of extra-role ideas that could

theoretically be submitted into the IMS system. Even in the latter case, the interviewees preferred the informal channels in promoting their ideas as they found it quicker, easier and more efficient. Only five interviewees reported having submitted an initiative through the formal system, although a proactive stance was evident in all discussions.

“Is it now an idea that's not concerning my own job? Because that's the condition for the idea management. It shouldn't be directly connected to your job because then it's just the normal way: You have an idea concerning your job, and you have to implement it or not. That's your decision. But, anyway, it's not like you will be awarded for it. So it's like it's your normal job. You are supposed to work there and bring in your ideas, of course.”

(Interview B 12)

The above comment also highlights the problematic effect of external regulation. While explicit rules are an inevitable part of a suggestion system, especially in terms of equal and transparent rewarding, they can also be perceived controlling. In this case, knowing that a particular idea is either too modest, too ambitious or too uncertain to be submitted into the official system, could create a sense of control and suppress the autonomous motivation to promote it any further. In fact, there was a sense of pride when white-collar employees talked about implementing improvement ideas without relying on the system:

“I, myself, feel that, if the implementation is in my hands, then we will just do it. Or we will keep a to-do list within the team or something. We won't start to circulate it through the system.”

(Interview B 6)

“I am a person who directly gives the ideas. It doesn't matter if it concerns me or not or my job. I'm not like the person that I'm running to the idea management software, somewhere where I can reserve the right for it. That's why, for me, it doesn't have to be a special process.”

(Interview B 12)

Although the interviewees demonstrated admirable personal initiative with such comments, their preference for informality lays an even heavier responsibility on their supervisors: Will they remain open-minded for all ideas? Can they guarantee that the informal ideas are handled as fairly as in the formal idea management process? Will these idea generators receive as much feedback and recognition?

5.2.2 *Perceptions of Organisational Climate*

From a theoretical standpoint, organisational members pick up messages of the kind of behaviour that is valued, expected, supported and rewarded within the organisation and from this, each of them constructs a personal perception of the organisational climate (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal 2017, 3). In the interviews, it was pointed out that giving constructive feedback requires a great deal of discretion and social skill. Receiving it without being offended, on the other hand, is very much a reflection of the organisational climate. As Isaksen and Ekvall (2010, 83) put it, the managerial challenge is to encourage debate about new ideas but to restrain personal conflict by accepting and appreciating diversity. In general, the interviewees stressed that listening to different perspectives and even critical opinions is an important part of idea generation:

“Maybe some other person with a different perspective, even without experience, is able to see the case from a different angle and it’s already enough to have a development idea. So that’s why this culture must be developed and developed all the time. But we have to treat the suggestions from people on the right way. That it is not a criticism of our way of doing things, but it’s something we can really use and implement to make it easier.”

(Interview B 1)

“Publishing the issue and making visible means that you can engage several brains in solving it.”

(Interview B 3)

In practice, however, the interviewees felt that challenging the status quo, however constructively, had not always been well received and therefore, it was not commonplace to do it, either. The following comments describe contentment with existing procedures as well as frustration with previous development efforts. In some cases, the idea generators seemed to anticipate these reactions and considered it wiser not to present their idea at all.

“The normal way, when you have an idea about new working methods, then it probably sometimes is: “Okay, it’s a good idea. Talk to other colleagues about it.” Or it’s: “Ah, no we tried this 10 years ago and it didn’t work. So it’s not working now.” Or: “It’s a dumb idea because we have worked for 15 years like this and it is working. So we are not changing.” You have the three possibilities and normally we are between “We are not

working with this because we tried.” or “We are not working with this because we have worked for 15 years this way and it has worked.”

(Interview B 10)

“In some instances I have felt that people lack the urge to make things happen. We are a bit stuck into thinking that this is the way of working that we are used to. Like, for example, when I was talking about the cash pool, I could receive a comment: ”Oh yeah, somebody has already been thinking about it a few years ago, so good luck with it.”

(Interview B 5)

In addition, one interviewee noted that colleagues appeared quite pleased if there was no feedback on their input. The interviewee’s unusual style of questioning work methods had resulted in a somewhat negative reputation within the team. A similar interpretation of the lack of feedback was mentioned when discussing informally about internal audits: According to the informant, nothing to reprimand had sometimes been understood as an approval of the current way of working and received with relief (Diary 23.10.2019). On the other hand, some interviewees felt that within their team — not so much between teams — shortcomings and challenges were discussed in an open and constructive manner.

Experiences of the level of hierarchy varied. The younger employees felt that it was relatively easy to suggest improvements to senior employees, although they were not always given serious consideration. Several interviewees also mentioned the existence of functional silos, which seemed to lead into thinking that one department’s challenge is not the concern of others:

“A lot of people think, okay, this is my department and everything after my department is not my problem. That’s a way of working I can’t agree because you’re developing a problem then for somebody else. So, you have to think about: Ok, who’s in contact with my product? Who needs to work with this afterwards? So to always have an open mind for their problems, too.”

(Interview B 10)

“We are a little bit separated cells, so we don't discuss the improvements. We don't discuss it together. We just improve here, just ourselves and don't... We are not in contact with the others.”

(Interview B 13)

The above comments refer to several kinds of divides between functions. For one, interviewees argued that they were unaware of the challenges faced in other departments. Any problems were typically expected to be solved within the function. These issues were also mentioned in the informal discussions (Diary 16.10. and 22.10.2018) For the other, the interviewees felt that good improvement ideas were not appreciated or applied elsewhere in the company.

On a more positive note, experimenting has strong foothold — at least in production:

“Experimenting is one important thing. We do a lot of such things that we try one way and then we have a plan B about how to return. We know our old problems, we can have those back anytime. If we have a chance to try something out, then, let’s see. — Ok, it didn’t work. We’ll back up, maybe change something a little and try again.”

(Interview B 3)

However, ideas involve a lot of uncertainty and personal risk for the idea generator. According to Yuan and Woodman (2010, 337) the fear of being regarded negatively by others is one of the main explanations for not innovating. As mentioned before, the interviewees expected solid arguments for any improvement ideas. Against this background, it is very understandable that some employees could fear a failure and prefer to keep their ideas to themselves.

“I would say that it [failure and mistakes] it is not ok at all. People have been a little afraid of it and this has lead into the fact that things have been revised and refined and worked and worked before they can be talked about aloud to anybody. Maybe the climate has changed a little bit in that respect.”

(Interview B 4)

Generally, the interviewees recognised the value of expressing even raw ideas. They reasoned that this could spark up a further idea in a colleague’s mind. Some of them also felt that opportunities for such open brainstorming do exist — provided they were themselves actively seeking for collegial feedback. Another interviewee would rather be considered ignorant than pretend to know everything, especially when talking to employees from the other functions. This interviewee had, however, noticed that not all colleagues follow the same logic.

“It’s just: “Yeah, we are working on it.” And nothing happens, because they didn’t know what I was talking about and they didn’t want to ask me

the question, what I actually meant by it. So, there is – I can't say in this [entire] company – but people are actually afraid to say: I don't know about this. Please, tell me what you mean. ... Sometimes they are afraid of saying something that might have them look stupid."

(Interview B 9)

Dediu et al. (2018, 319) confirmed that idea generation is particularly dependent on managers' and colleagues' support. According to them, concrete positive feedback obviously enhances proactivity, but even just the confidence that there will be social support if needed, increases a sense of control over one's job. In addition, social support can help develop the idea as others contribute with different perspectives. What's more, in doing so they might also assume ownership for the idea, which will facilitate the ultimate realisation of it. After a successful change project, one interviewee reflected on the risk of failures in the following manner:

"Of course there will be failures every now and then. If you try something new for the first time, it's not necessarily a success. Anyway, what's more important, is that you want to improve and to develop. You develop through failures and you can't always succeed or then you are not really challenging yourself. You just have to accept that."

(Interview B 8)

The interviewees were also asked whether they think that innovative behaviour or idea suggestion is expected of them. This inquiry followed the logic of Yuan and Woodman (2010) and Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2017) that employees positive perceptions of innovation-related expectations, support and rewards is what constitutes an organisational climate for innovation. Several respondents pointed out that the idea management system is itself a signal that ideas are welcome. However, some of them felt that idea generation could be monitored more closely. For some, this meant keeping a record of the number of ideas per department and for others, a more thorough handling of the issue at the personal development discussion. In one occasion, it was also brought up that the top management has displayed very little interest in the system since its launch.

In the previous chapter, company sources, such as the business strategy, the people strategy and the e-learning modules, were investigated in order to identify explicit management expectations for innovative behaviour. While developing was considered a natural part of work by many interviewees, none of them referred to the strategy or the training modules as an impetus for such action. However, several direct supervisors had themselves requested ideas from their team. They applied various techniques to stimulate ideas: Some managers had made it very clear to their team that they wanted to receive as

much feedback as possible, some had requested ideas related to a specific topic, while others had encouraged their team members to submit ideas through the official channel.

In sum, the organisational climate at Oras Group appears tolerant and respectful, but relatively conventional in white-collar employees' accounts. Risk and confrontation are typically avoided and in general, a conscientious and hard-working attitude seems to predominate — rather than an explorative or questioning style of work.

5.2.3 *Essential Abilities*

While it may be difficult to determine or evaluate innovative behaviour, it appears that the abilities required for innovative behaviour are even more ambiguous. The interviewees could seldom name specific abilities but they often referred to general social and communication skills. However, they did bring up a few specific trainings that had helped them in idea generation and promotion. These had been about project management or the so-called six sigma quality management. Another interviewee described the importance of project management skills in the six sigma improvement projects that he had been involved with:

“It must be, somehow, started and ended and you must draw some conclusions. And as in every project, you need to somehow summarize if it went well. You need to do that and somehow show the other departments or the colleagues that: Okay, we succeeded. Look what we did. And if you did not succeed, then you need to somehow evaluate what went wrong and what shall be done better during the next project.”

(Interview B 16)

What is also significant in the above quote is the publication of good results. Not only will it inspire others and raise the status of idea management, but it is also a smart practice to inform colleagues about on-going and realised trials and improvement projects so that they would not make the same suggestion again later as was noted in the interviews as well as the observations (Diary 4.4.2019)

Based on the principles of innovation management, it was expected that cross-functional experience would stimulate ideas (see, for example, Kanter 1988; Tidd and Bessant 2013). Likewise, de Jong et al. (2015, 9) have suggested that new opportunities are discovered when different thought worlds collide. The interviewees spoke very fondly of their experiences in cross-functional projects or processes:

“I have not been involved in such a great target setting since... We named a number of targets that benefitted several teams and the implementation ran like a clockwork, because we had agreed them together.”

(Interview B 6)

In a number of interviews, the participants expressed that there is currently very little cross-functional co-operation. In some occasions they also mentioned lack information sharing between countries and the group sites. While such a feature cannot be called a disability in ideation, it certainly hinders gaining relevant knowledge, skills and abilities. The interviewees felt that increasing co-operation could enhance benchmarking, holistic thinking and networking which, in turn, would assist in refining ideas. A concrete case for the lack of information sharing between departments was brought up in a casual conversation over lunch: It concerned a record of order-delivery times for manufactured products. The product management and procurement teams had been compiling this file for a year, but the quality department had just spent several days in inquiring about exact order-delivery times without hearing about it. (Diary 7.3.2019.)

There were some themes that were repeatedly brought up in talking about idea generation: For some, the preparation of an idea was a solitary task that required time and effort, others were happy to express spontaneous ideas to colleagues and to brainstorm with raw ideas. Trying to solve work-related problems was recognised as a good way to come up with ideas, particularly in technology-driven functions such as research and development and production.

Surprisingly, only a few interviewees reported actively seeking new knowledge or ideas from outside the company, for example, from collegial branch meetings or Internet courses. If they did, such activities were self-initiated and from this, it can be concluded that supervisors do not systematically request such personal development. This is a shortage from the idea management point of view since the essential capabilities related idea generation often concern acquiring new knowledge and identifying opportunities (Chang et al. 2013).

When promoting ideas, white-collar employees frequently emphasised the need for sound arguments and evidence. In order to prove their idea and to gain some concrete evidence, they analysed data or arranged test groups or small opinion polls. Obviously, in a managerial position, it was possible to run pilot projects to test the idea. Such trials were reported in both production and office work. The interviewees also stressed presentation skills:

“I think a lot of the time, the one that presents the idea the best will win, unfortunately. This is kind of a problem, I think.”

(Interview B 7)

When talking about presenting ideas, white-collar employees often mentioned “selling” the idea or taking their audience into consideration. One interviewee had invited an outside consultant to speak about the issue in order to convince his superiors. Another one mentioned that he had particular skills in model-making, which was a good way to win technology-oriented colleagues over. In a third case, the interviewee felt particularly capable of analysing the financial benefits of improvement ideas.

Finally, the importance of social skills was evident in the interviewees’ descriptions of promoting ideas:

“Best is, of course, that I only just bring a small idea, only a part of this idea, to steer in the right direction, what I thought generally and then discuss it with him. And then it’s our idea, not my idea. And then he takes it as his own and then it looks better. It’s just the way, I think this is very important to bring it in the right way. Because the most fantastic ideas, they don’t work if they don’t like it. Or they don’t see it, or they see it like critics. That somebody is criticising them and nobody likes such a situation and then they don’t take it.”

(Interview B 2)

In this light, the training modules related to organisational behaviour appear very relevant if not very effective in encouraging innovative behaviour. The interviewees appeared to have acquired such skills mainly through personal experience and reflection like in the above quote.

In conclusion, it appears that training mainly has an indirect effect on innovative behaviour. Through workshops and other training sessions employees become aware of the importance of co-operation and knowledge exchange. At the same time, they gain confidence in their co-workers abilities. (Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014, 202.) Furthermore, coming across external knowledge and diverse ideas can stimulate creative thinking, which was confirmed by those interviewees who had participated in benchmarking or collegial meetings outside the company. The importance of lifelong learning was also highlighted by de Jong et al. (2015, 21), who found that high education was associated with high levels of entrepreneurial behaviour.

5.2.4 Different Types of Motivation

The interview participant selection was based on recommendations: The management team and the background interviewees were asked to suggest innovative, proactive or

development-oriented white-collar employees. It is, therefore, not surprising that the interviewees were all inclined to make improvement suggestions and demonstrated an overall positive attitude towards new ideas and change.

In Sanders's et al. (2010, 65) study, knowledge workers' innovative behaviour was found to be heavily dependent on their satisfaction with work content and not on direct rewards, which led the researchers to conclude that innovative knowledge workers tend to be intrinsically motivated. The interviews of this study extended this assumption: It appears that innovative behaviour is not driven by intrinsic motivation only, but by various kinds of autonomous motivation, which are clearly depicted in the following interview quotes:

- Identified extrinsic motivation: *"I think in this particular case it's because I have a great interest and I know it benefits our organization somewhere."* (Interview B 7)
- Integrated extrinsic motivation: *"It's just who I am. That's how I work. It's literally who I am, I know nothing else. It's the nature of my job. I am always looking for new technologies, for new ways of working..."* (Interview B 11)
- Intrinsic motivation: *"It is a big part of what makes the job meaningful. I like it like crazy when I see something completed and we have managed to make some progress."* (Interview B 3)

As proposed by Bammens (2015, 249), the different types of motivation presented above were, as well, linked to different stages of the innovative behaviour: The first interviewee was talking about compiling a reference file of construction projects to support sales. The idea was an old one and he had accepted the responsibility of implementing it. In the second case, the interviewee was very keen on searching for new information and opportunities, which falls into the problem recognition stage of innovative behaviour — or in terms of innovation process, seizing opportunities (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1988, p. 96) The third comment was related to manufacturing process improvements and hence, to idea generation and promotion.

Altogether, the interview comments resonate well with self-determination theory. According to Gagné and Deci (2005, 347) autonomous motivation, which could be a mix of the types depicted above, leads to excellence in performance in situations that include both interesting and complex elements as well as more mundane tasks that require discipline. In fact, the differences in the quality of motivation could potentially explain the diverse outcomes related to the effects of rewards on innovative behaviour. For example, there is so far little knowledge about how rewards influence internalising extrinsic motivation. In that case, action is stimulated by an internalised importance and value, even if the task itself was considered tedious or taxing. (Gagné & Deci 2005, 354—355.)

As discussed before, according to self-determination theory, autonomous motivation is enhanced when employees experience satisfaction of the basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Gagné & Deci 2005, 336). The following interviewee comments depict a sense of autonomy, which was evident among these proactive people.

“I like to take control of an issue and find out about it and get it done. I like the fact that I can develop my own way and style to do things and that’s accepted. The kind of micro management — I don’t thrive under that.”

(Interview B 5)

“Now that I have more autonomy and I can influence on bigger entities, I see potential initiatives everywhere. My working day is nothing but seeing that this could be improved and there’s something we could do.”

(Interview B 3)

Furthermore, Abstein and Spieth (2014) considered employee discretion an important feature of a HRM system aimed at encouraging innovative behaviour. In other words, employees should have both accountability for and control over their jobs. This point was well illustrated by the following comment:

“I think that we are quite, if I can say it, quite good at our work. We have practiced, so I think they can rely on us and that's a good feeling that we are, really, full of responsibility and relied on.”

(Interview B 13)

In addition to the sense of autonomy, the interviewees displayed a strong sense of competence. While this concept is derived from self-determination theory, several authors have also emphasised similar motivational factors, such as self-efficacy (Axtell et al. 2000; Hammond et al. 2011) and positive performance expectations (Yuan & Woodman 2010). The following quotes reflect interviewees’ confidence in performing well in tasks that require innovative effort:

“I came here, and from the beginning I was involved, and I was allowed to suggest ideas and to develop, and I was given big and important projects to run, where I could also... The point was also that I can grow along the project. It was not something familiar, but it was also something new for me, but through that project I could learn about it and share this new knowledge with the team and develop my specialist capabilities.”

(Interview B 8)

“So I don’t have a feeling that I’m ready or something, but a positive, motivated feeling. But I also feel, that at some point I have to challenge myself a bit or start to do something outside [current duties] ... I feel that I have a lot to give in the current position.”

(Interview B 6)

On the other hand, the employees’ sense of relatedness was not so obvious — not in the interviews nor in the observations. This is also reflected in the previous chapter when examining the organisational climate: The interviewees mentioned fear of failure, risk of appearing stupid and in some cases, break of trust. Büschgens et al. (2013, 142) clarify that when an organisation values radical innovation as a crucial part of its competitive advantage, the idea generator will receive positive feedback for creativity — even if the idea is ultimately rejected. This will enhance his sense of relatedness and hence, autonomous motivation. Some interviewees did also bring up positive experiences, feeling that expressing an idea within their own team did not require particular courage and the colleagues’ attitudes were supportive, not discouraging.

As discussed earlier in the theory chapter, the motivating effect of rewarding is a controversial issue. On one hand, the employees expect a due recognition and feedback for their initiative, especially if they consider it extra-role behaviour (Zhang & Begley 2011). On the other hand, there is little evidence that tangible rewards enhance intrinsic motivation or innovation and creativity (Deci & Koestner 1999a). Yet, a perception of unfair remuneration could be detrimental to motivation (Gagné & Deci 2005, 354; Janssen 2000, 290).

This problematic nature was also noticeable in the interviewees’ comments about rewarding. While they accepted that they were not eligible for a reward for the majority of the ideas, because the ideas would most likely concern their own work, they still hoped that their behaviour would be recognised by colleagues as well as supervisors.

“But if it’s more from insiders, it’s different to have a system with rewards, because it’s only work. But this, I don’t need this reward, especially for this idea, because I hope other people still can see: “Aha, this was a good idea from X.” And in the long run, maybe I get even a salary improvement.”

(Interview B 2)

In many occasions, the interviewees felt that seeing their idea realised and seeing the benefits or improvements is a reward in itself. In that case, the monetary reward was

considered a bonus. However, they tended to assume that a potential reward is a motivating factor for others. In deed, in the light of this autonomously motivated interview sample, it is impossible to say whether extrinsic motivators, such as monetary reward, still play some role in motivating white-collar employees in general. However, as noted earlier, extrinsic motivation has its downsides. For example, one interviewee speculated whether the possibility of a reward undermines spontaneous ideas.

“It's a good initiative to reward the people who actively give their ideas, but on the other side, it can maybe stop the idea or the innovation spirit because people think: Okay, when I have the possibility to get some money out of this, maybe I will keep it for myself, and then develop it, and then offer it through the system in order to get money, instead of giving it [just] like this.”

(Interview B 12)

Along similar vein, it was suggested during an informal discussion that the current rewarding system could be misused by trading ideas to employees, who could be rewarded for them, because they work at a lower level or in another function (Diary 2.10.2018). However, such concerns were not confirmed by the interviews. From a theoretical standpoint, Sanders et al. (2010, 65) reflected that compensation subdues voluntary extra-role behaviour as it emphasises the transactional nature of the employment relationship. As a consequence, Büschgens et al. (2013, 149) propose that the reward system should aim at enhancing autonomous extrinsic motivation. In order to support radical innovations, an emphasis on regular salary, developmental feedback and bonuses shared on an ex-post basis are the most important elements to consider.

5.2.5 Perceived Opportunities

In general, the interviewee comments related to opportunities for innovative behaviour concerned managerial support, feedback and job design. The latter refers to enlarging jobs horizontally, so that there is a great variety of tasks, as well as laterally, so that employees are responsible of entire processes and can also participate in decision making (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

First of all, experiences of involvement and appreciation encourage suggestion making. Based on the interviews, it can be concluded that supervisors have a big role in encouraging innovative behaviour. This is in line with the previous literature about the antecedents of innovative behaviour (Sanders et al. 2010, 61). The importance of supervisor

support was highlighted in a number of interviews, out of which the following quote illustrates particularly well its empowering effect:

“When I was working my first day at the company and I had no practical experience on marketing, she would instantly ask my opinion about things, which hasn’t happened anywhere before. I was regarded as an equal member of the team and they wanted to listen because I was not fixed to those practices. They wanted my opinion, how I would do it.”

(Interview B 8)

Likewise, research on autonomous motivation proposes that supervisor autonomy support is the key component of supporting optimal employee performance (Gagné & Deci 2005, 350). When team members take self-initiated actions, it can also ease the supervisor’s workload, as can be seen from the following comment by a manager.

“And then she just said: I’ve actually done it. I changed it. – Perfect! So I just need to sign the paper work and then we are up and running. So, it’s also going back to this, making decisions without being afraid of being told of. I said to everybody, I’d rather have you take a decision and then come to me afterwards and say you’ve done it because of this and this. I’ll never be mad. It might be that I don’t agree, but then we’ll talk about it.”

(Interview B 9)

Admittedly, managers are not always as supportive and open for ideas as in the case above. This is partially explained by the lack time: Managers who have the authority to decide do not consider the idea a priority. Often, they say that the idea is generally good, but it needs more research or testing and for the time being, there are other topics to do. (Diary 5.4.2019.) In an informal discussion, a white-collar employee explained that typically, if she has an improvement idea that is not listened to by the management, she finds people that she can convince and promotes and implements the idea with them. (Diary 7.3.2019)

On the other hand, supervisor’s rejection of an idea without careful reasoning can be detrimental to motivation just as well as the lack of feedback. Some interviewees felt that it was typical for managers and colleagues to reject an idea and to argue that it had been tried before and it had not worked then. There is, however, another side to this, which was clearly illustrated by a production supervisor:

“It’s so: I am trying to be always one or two steps ahead. When somebody is coming with an idea: “We can do this!” But this idea was here 5 years

ago and I say to him: "No, it's not possible." I know it, but he cannot know that it is not possible. It was difficult for me, this reaction... or trying to avoid this reaction... It's better: "Yes, I'll check it." But if I say this two times, one day the people will not be coming. ... Not so: "It was an idea from me." But only to say this idea was here and we didn't implement it because it was not possible because of these things... It's nothing else, but it is very difficult to explain to someone who sees a thing only from one angle without any other context, that it cannot be realized for various reasons."

(Interview B 14)

The interviewees stressed that managers have to be open-minded for employee ideas even if they don't appear extremely relevant at the first sight. As noted earlier, white-collar employees usually prepare and assess their ideas thoroughly before presenting them. They also accept a negative decision if it is well argued. However, a lack feedback was found extremely frustrating.

"It's not that the first idea was turned away, the second was turned — no problem. I understand, not all ideas can be realised. But you have to prove them and argue why they cannot be realised."

(Interview B 12)

"I think a lot of people loose motivation when they ask questions and they don't get a feedback. The feedback could be: I don't know how to solve this yet, but we'll put it forward. If you put in different questions all the time and the feedback is not coming back, then some day you'll stop because it's not working. I think that's where management really needs to look into: If we really want to do this, how do we make sure that we give the proper feedback?"

(Interview B 9)

The interviewees also noted that while suggestion making requires a sense of self-efficacy, the direct supervisor also has to have a strong self-esteem to take it further. For one respondent, it was important that the team leader has received leadership training and is in every measure just as competent as the team members, whereas the interviewee below questioned whether the supervisor has to be an expert in the topic of the idea.

"I think, perhaps, for managers it is difficult to, how can I say, if it's not their own ideas, difficult for them to approve. If it is a big change. I'm not

talking about a small change. I'm talking about a big change. If it doesn't come from the management level, the employee level has to sell these again and again, trying to make the point until it becomes their, the managers' idea...

... Working in the start-ups and agencies, all the time with very innovative people, I have noticed that the new management style is.... they rely a lot on their employees because they don't feel threatened by somebody's competence. They want the people to be competent. They want the people to be at their best. They want to encourage this and this is perhaps something that here, it doesn't happen as much."

(Interview B 11)

From a job design perspective, innovative behaviour appeared quite natural in positions, where there was great autonomy and possibilities for piloting ideas. The quote below is from production but similar kind of ownership and overview was reported in functions such as finance or quality. The latter comment illustrates the importance of a variety of tasks in white-collar work.

"In practice I'm beginning to know the entire factory so well, our production process, because I have experience in brass production and in plastic production. At the assembly, I have had subordinates and I have worked there also. So, in a way I see the entire field and the support functions and partners that exist. I can influence a lot but sometimes I wonder if I am too active in these things."

(Interview B 3)

"I would say that challenge — and meaning, too — come through that way that for the past year I have been able to take part in somewhat different things. I don't like running routines all the time. I get quite quickly bored if there are no new perspectives."

(Interview B 4)

The interviewees were also asked how ideas come about in their experience. For some, creative solutions required taking distance from the work station or thinking it over. However, according to them, such slack time is seldom available. Others felt that moderate pressure could, in fact, stimulate ideas:

"I think there are two situations that you are looking for improvement: One, that you are overloaded with the job and you are forced to make

changes. And another one, that you have the time to think about changes and you are trying to improve the daily job, simply.”

(Interview B 1)

“Ideas are born out problems and challenges, that’s how they come about. Sometimes they come about because you have a certain target and then you start to think about how to get to it. Then you can quite quickly recognise the challenges there. When you find the solutions, that’s how ideas are formulated.”

(Interview B 3)

Some interviewees suggested that working time allocated for further development of an initial idea could act as a reward. In fact, according to the interviewees, lack of time was one of the main reasons for not expressing ideas. There was an expectation that the idea would not be given priority and would ultimately be forgotten among the myriad of tasks to do. This conclusion was further supported by the observations (Diary 23.10.2018). If the implementation of the idea was likely to be added on top of the idea generator’s daily responsibilities, then they might rather keep quiet about it. On the other hand, ideas take up supervisors’ and decision-makers’ time, too (Diary 22.10.2018)

6 CONCLUSION

The white-collar employees interviewed and observed for this study were a heterogeneous group of specialists and managers working in a range of disciplines in a European manufacturing company. However, informality, spontaneity and perceived autonomy were common features in their innovative behaviour. Consequently, the following theoretical discussion comments on the varied types of autonomous motivation detected in this study and the ways to enhance basic need satisfaction as proposed by self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci 2000). The practical implications, for their part, concern creating optimal conditions for self-initiated innovative behaviour and focus on issues such as organisational climate, managerial support and job design.

6.1 Drivers and Barriers of Innovative Behaviour

The purpose of this study was to find out what encourages innovative behaviour in white-collar work. In the following, the conclusions from the research are divided into drivers and barriers — that is, factors that either encourage or discourage innovative behaviour within this employee group. In table 2, these factors are further categorised according to their connection to the organisational climate, the abilities, the motivation or the opportunities that support innovative behaviour. The categorisation refers to the AMO framework (Lepak et al. 2006) that has been systematically applied throughout the study.

The majority of the factors, particularly the ones related to opportunities, were clearly evidenced in the empirical data of this study. However, some factors, such as a sense of relatedness, have a strong theoretical grounding, but were not observed during the field-work. Hence, table 2 is not an evaluation of the idea management system of the focal organisation, but a synthesis of the theoretical and empirical understanding gained during the research project.

Table 2: The drivers and barriers of white-collar innovative behaviour

	Drivers	Barriers
Climate		
	Openness for ideas	Conservative attitudes
	Top management involvement	
	Clear innovation expectations	Negative performance expectations
	Constructive criticism and debate	Interpersonal conflict
	Expressing unrefined ideas	Self-censorship
	Trust	
	Collegial support	Anticipated negative reactions
	Experimenting	Fear of failure
Abilities		
	Social skills, co-operation	Lack of knowledge exchange
	Formulating and presenting ideas	
	Acquiring new knowledge	
	Lifelong learning	
Motivation		
	Recognition in appraisal	Lack of feedback
	Sense of autonomy	Rejection without reasoning
	Sense of relatedness	
Sense of competence		
	Self efficacy	
	Professional identity	
Rewarding		
	Collective rewards	Sense of control
	Recognition and positive feedback	Perceived unfairness
	Time and resources	Lack of recognition
Opportunities		
	Development projects	Ideas developed in isolation
	Cross-functional co-operation	Functional silos
	Testing and piloting	Physical distance
	Supervisor support	Slow decision-making on ideas
	Feedback	
Informality		
	Self-initiation, spontaneity	No positive examples
	Sense of autonomy	No sharing of best practices
Job design		
	Job autonomy	
	Task variety	

In this study, organisational climate was understood as a social construction; a collection of interpretations and conclusions that each employee has made whilst pursuing his daily work. In this sense, the aspects of organisational climate reflect the prevailing human resource management practices and policies — although not necessarily in the way the system designers have intended (Abstein & Spieth 2014). The aspects that encourage innovative behaviour include openness and trust. As a consequence, employees find it easier to express unrefined ideas or constructive criticism for colleagues' ideas. In the opposite situation, white-collar employees tend to be too critical towards their own ideas even though voicing them could catalyse an ideation process within a larger group.

Clear communication of innovation-related expectations also contributes to an organisational climate that encourages innovative behaviour. The involvement and role-modelling of top management is essential in signalling that such behaviour is valued and expected of employees. They need to know that their innovative efforts will be acknowledged and met with respect and support, rather than disregard, by supervisors and colleagues alike (Yuan & Woodman 2010, 337). Such a message will also alleviate typical conservative attitudes claiming that the idea has been found ineffective in the past or that the conventional method is better and there is, therefore, no sense in testing the idea.

Previous literature has identified that training and selection are the most important HR practices in enhancing abilities for innovative behaviour (Bos-Nehles et al. 2017). The focus of this study was on the development of the existing workforce and, therefore, the effect of selecting innovative employees was not considered. As for training, it appeared to have relatively little direct benefits according to the interviewees: The knowledge, skills and abilities that were considered relevant, such as knowledge of emerging technologies and opportunities or social skills were seldom acquired in formal training. On the other hand, lack of knowledge exchange between departments and company locations was confirmed to be barrier of innovative behaviour as indicated by previous literature (Chang et al. 2013).

This study confirmed that lack of feedback and recognition can be detrimental motivation for innovative behaviour. Schuh et al. (2018) described how a low-quality relationship between supervisor and subordinate may imply that the innovative efforts of an employee are not reflected in the performance appraisal. If, by contrast, employees' sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness are supported with positive and developmental feedback and supervisor's apparent confidence in their abilities, they are likely to relish challenges and learning opportunities, as was testified by several interviewees. In practice, however, some of the employees' ideas will be rejected. In that case, it is critical for the white-collar employees to hear a thorough reasoning for the negative decision.

In general, this study supports the view that white-collar innovative behaviour tends to be driven by autonomous motivation. The interviews and observations also indicated that extrinsic motivators, such as monetary incentives or being pressured by the management, are relatively ineffective in encouraging innovativeness. However, it is likely that some employees or certain tasks are still extrinsically motivated although such attitudes were not evidenced in this study.

As reviewed, existing literature does not support the use of monetary incentives in idea management. Among knowledge workers in particular, higher satisfaction with direct rewards was, in fact, connected to lower innovative behaviour (Sanders et al. 2010, 65). Additionally, compensation that is considered controlling or unfair could be detrimental to such extra-role behaviour. Consequently, scholars recommend collective or intangible

rewarding of ideas (Büschgens et al. 2013; Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014). Some interviewees of this study suggested that time and resources to further develop their own idea would feel motivating.

The interviewees reported various experiences of particular opportunities for innovative behaviour. Typically, they had been involved in a development project of some kind that had inspired further improvement ideas — even ideas that were unrelated to the original topic. Clear objectives, critical debate and multidisciplinary nature were common features for these projects. What's more, some of interviewees had had the authority to organise pilot projects and trials for improvement ideas, which naturally provided excellent opportunities for practical learning and refining ideas.

On the other hand, the background research brought up an issue concerning the quality of the ideas. For example, the product ideas presented in the opportunity day were often generated by a single person and, as a consequence, were lacking in market potential or cost-benefit analysis. The category managers saw that engaging a team in developing the idea from early on could solve this problem. Similarly, according to the interviewees, good initiatives implemented in one department or company site were seldom transferred to other functions or locations. Altogether, the isolation of people, disciplines or locations was confirmed to hamper innovative behaviour as indicated by the classics of innovation management literature (Kanter 1988, 98—100).

Supervisor support and feedback was found to be one of the main drivers for white-collar innovative behaviour. These factors are presented under opportunities in table 2, but they are also closely related to abilities, motivation and organisational climate. First, informative feedback can guide personal development and learning, which, in turn, will strengthen innovation abilities. Second, the supervisor can provide team members with opportunities to participate and to influence on work methods and targets, which will contribute to a sense of autonomy. Third, positive feedback and encouragement from the direct supervisor enhances employees' innovative behaviour as it highlights the value of innovative behaviour in reaching organisational objectives as well as important personal aspirations.

In this research, autonomy and informality were found to be characteristic of white-collar innovative behaviour. In fact, they can be seen as two aspects of the same issue: A sense of autonomy drives self-determined action, which would wither away when faced with controlling elements, such as needless bureaucracy or strict rules and commands. However, expressing ideas informally could cause that the wider organisation will not hear about the improved practices that result from the idea nor follow the lead of such innovative behaviour.

6.2 Theoretical Discussion

This study is in accordance with de Spiegeleare et al. (2015) conclusion that different employee groups require different emphasises in the practices and policies aimed at encouraging innovative behaviour. Previous literature highlights the importance of task content, perceived autonomy and feedback for white-collar innovative behaviour. While these determinants were, likewise, characteristic to the results of this study, it was also discovered that the white-collar employees typically preferred informal channels for promoting their ideas. The proactive employees interviewed in this study took pride in solving work related problems and promoting and implementing their own ideas without any obligation or formal system. They considered this behaviour an integral part of their job and, in some cases, evidently a part of their professional identity. From a theoretical perspective, this notion suggests that they had internalised the value and importance of innovative behaviour and, thus, assumed autonomous motivation for it.

In this study, there was no attempt to attach specific types of motivation to certain tasks or personalities. Rather, it was evident that the quality of individual motivation varies depending on the situation and the perceived importance of the activity. According to Gagné and Deci (2005, 349), when an activity is considered “socially valued” and there is “an autonomy-supportive social context”, people will tend to internalise the underlying regulation, although they could, initially, be driven by extrinsic motivation. The results of this study, summarised in the previous chapter, provided a concrete and detailed description of the conditions that are needed so that employees’ extrinsic motivation for innovative behaviour could shift towards more autonomous forms, which are proven to enhance effective and persistent performance as well as employee well-being (Gagné & Deci 2005, 337).

However, the interviewees of this study were selected because of their outstanding proactivity. While they expressed a strong sense of competence and autonomy at work, they rarely mentioned a sense of relatedness, which would have inspired or resulted from their innovative efforts. At the same time, the company documents or observations did not reveal a great deal of explicit communication that would signal the social value of innovative behaviour. In conclusion, it appears that proactive and highly educated knowledge workers are prone to internalising innovative behaviour even without strong social support or cultural endorsement. They seem to regard it as an expression of their professional identity. Yet, following self-determination theory, it is not likely that all employees embrace innovative behaviour in such a wholehearted way, unless they experience a sense of participation and belonging in doing so. If that was the case, making suggestions and experimenting on new methods would be considered signature behaviour that characterises and binds together the members of the organisation.

This raises an issue about the intrinsic value of ideas. In other words, there can be a concrete value in the form of cost savings or sales increase, but the presentation, evaluation, promotion and eventual realisation of an idea demonstrates that the organisation values and supports innovative behaviour. Idea management has typically had an inferior status in comparison to the formal new product development process: A suggestion system has been regarded as an unlikely source for radical innovations or patented inventions. The results of this study suggest, in the contrary, that it should be considered, above all, an essential tool for encouraging organisation-wide inclination and esteem for innovative behaviour.

So far in this study, motivation and organisational climate have been discussed separately for the sake of clarity. The former has been connected to specific HR practices such as rewarding and appraisals, the latter has been thought to reflect the HRM system as a whole. Basic need satisfaction is what explains the link between these two aspects of encouraging innovative behaviour. For example, a satisfaction of the need for autonomy does not only result from an autonomous job design, but is also dependent on a supportive organisational climate and managerial behaviour (Strauss & Parker 2014, 62—64). Respectively, when the interviewees called for a climate with trust, open-mindedness and collegial support, they were, in fact, demonstrating a need for relatedness.

In sum, having autonomously chosen the course of action; feeling confident and competent in pursuing it and feeling cared for and respected as a member of the community, will contribute to an autonomous motivation. Such motivation predicts psychological growth and learning and sustained effort even in tasks that are not interesting or enjoyable in themselves. (Gagné & Deci 2005, 336—339) These presumptions derived from self-determination theory were clearly valid in this study. However, it is not self-evident that the motivation for learning and extending oneself will lend itself to specific organisational objectives such as increased innovative behaviour. To direct action to that end is, again, a matter of communication and organisational climate: According to Gagné and Deci (2005, 339) clear structures and limits are required for employees to internalise desired values and behaviours. Internalisation is further supported by the endorsement and role-modelling of top management.

In order to understand what encourages innovative behaviour, this study has not been limited to examining the inter-related effects of organisational climate and motivation. Instead, it has followed a conceptual model by Lepak et al. (2006), which proposes that individual performance is driven by abilities and opportunities as well as motivation and organisational climate. Previous research on the determinants of innovative behaviour, which was extensively reviewed in this report, emphasises supporting motivation and providing opportunities and optimal conditions for innovative behaviour. The practical context of this study, however, led into thinking that it is also important to increase the abilities in idea development and promotion: White-collar employees are generally highly

educated and great experts in their own field. Provided there is also an organisational climate for innovation and an abundance of opportunities for creating and presenting ideas, in the long run, the decision-makers will be overburdened with ideas to evaluate and offer feedback for. It is, therefore, vital that the quality of the ideas is also improved by ensuring that the idea has been assessed from several perspectives and refined and adjusted accordingly before formal evaluation.

Some of the proactive white-collar employees interviewed in this study had particular abilities in modelling, making presentations or counting costs. In other cases, the interviewees had excellent opportunities to test their ideas in practice. In both cases, their ideas were developed and refined without much publicity; an improvement suggestion would not be presented before the idea was considered ready.

Based on extant research, it could be concluded that the above-mentioned employees had abilities, process ownership or autonomy that enabled their innovative behaviour (Axtell et al. 2000, 283; De Spiegelaere et al. 2012). For example, job autonomy, i.e., independence to decide over work procedures and schedules, is proven to increase entrepreneurial behaviour since it enhances self-efficacy, felt responsibility and flexible role orientations (De Jong et al. 2015, 8). Hence, when aiming at enhanced innovativeness among all employees, it appears crucial that similar opportunities for participating and learning were also offered to those who have, so far, not expressed their ideas spontaneously.

6.3 Managerial Implications

This research was commissioned by Oras Group. The study indicated that there is, in deed, a lot of expertise and knowledge among the company's white-collar employees, but this innovative potential is currently not employed in an optimal way. However, the following implications are likely to apply in a much wider context: First, several studies (see, for example, Hammond et al. 2011, 24) have demonstrated that the level of education correlates positively with innovativeness and, therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the employee groups with higher-than-average education are strongly involved in idea management. Second, the cross-sectional interview sample included employees from various functions, positions and nationalities. As a consequence, the findings are not task- or country-specific, but likely to apply in white-collar work in general. Third, lack of cooperation and knowledge sharing, which were also observed in the studied context, have frequently been identified as a barrier for innovation in large organisations (Kanter 2006, 77; Tidd & Bessant 2013, 580). Thus, similar organisations may benefit from the recommendations below.

The results of this study confirmed the findings of Axtell et al. (2000, 283) that “employees who have the confidence and the opportunity to take a wider, more autonomous and more skilled role at work” are more likely to engage in innovative behaviour. In deed, it has since been demonstrated in several studies that job design that allows for more autonomy and variety is truly effective in encouraging innovative behaviour (De Jong et al. 2015; De Spiegelaere et al. 2012; Dorenbosch et al. 2005). In addition, Axtell et al. recommended training on critical thinking and the wider aspects of the organisation — not just on the technical knowledge related to the prescribed job.

Likewise, this study indicated that transferable skills such as problem solving, leadership and general social skills are the most relevant aspects of personnel development when aiming at enhanced innovative behaviour. On the other hand, increasing employees’ external contacts, cross-functional co-operation and career shifts from one function to another are likely to stimulate new knowledge acquisition and lifelong learning. Practices such as job rotation and internal job transfer could provide employees with a fresh perspective and new ideas.

Furthermore, this study demonstrated that money is not the primary trigger for innovative behaviour in white-collar work. If monetary rewards are, nevertheless, applied, Gagné and Deci (2005, 354) propose that they should be administered in an autonomy-supportive climate. What’s more, employees should be rewarded on a collective basis (Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014, 201) and for their participation and effort, rather than celebrating individual performance and innovation results only (Fernandez & Moldogaziev 2013). Anyway, Sanders et al. (2010, 61, 65) remind that money cannot substitute good management. In fact, managers are the primary influencers on the employees’ perceptions of the organisations HR practices and policies (Alfes et al. 2013, 852).

Indeed, managerial support and feedback were discovered to be more important than tangible rewards in motivating white-collar employees’ innovative behaviour. According to De Jong and Den Hartog (2007, 58), general leadership behaviours, such as consulting, providing support, autonomy and recognition as well as creating a positive and safe atmosphere encourage subordinates’ innovative behaviour. Additionally, the researchers identified behaviours specifically aimed at stimulating innovative behaviour, including facilitating knowledge transfer and providing intellectual challenge, varied tasks and an attractive vision.

Prieto and Pérez-Santana (2014, 203) conclude that “a sense of general job mastery” and high-quality relationships with supervisors and colleagues are the foundations of employee innovative behaviour. This supports the case for satisfying the basic needs for competence and relatedness in order to facilitate the internalisation of extrinsic motivation. As concluded in this study, supporting autonomous motivation is first and foremost

about creating opportunities for choice, influence and involvement. Constructive feedback and praise that is also followed through in performance appraisals and personal development plans is, likewise, essential for the internalisation process.

In this study, the few interviewees who had submitted an idea through the formal system were very satisfied with the process, even if their idea had not been accepted or rewarded. However, the majority of the interviewees preferred the informal channels for suggestion making. In that case, a fair and transparent evaluation of the idea and the subsequent appraisal about this employee's innovativeness is very much dependent of the supervisor-subordinate relationship. Subordinates who belong to an in-group might receive favourable performance evaluations and the ones who have a more distant relationship with their supervisor might be left without any feedback (Schuh et al. 2018).

What's more, rewarding one idea generator, even if the supervisor's actions were both transparent and equitable, could lead to the resentment of those individuals who have not received due recognition from their supervisors in similar instances (Prieto & Pérez-Santana 2014, 201). Consequently, it is important that supervisors are given adequate training about evaluating individual innovative performance. They should be aware that innovative behaviour occurs in various and ambiguous ways and may involve risk, but it is, nevertheless, desirable and crucial considering overall company performance.

This research has been guided by a concern for unspoken ideas. In the beginning, it was assumed that the formally submitted ideas only represent a small part of white-collar employees' innovative behaviour. A focus on the formal initiative system plays down the importance of informal idea suggestion. As a consequence, spontaneous or strategic initiatives may be left out — the former because of self-censorship, the latter because they might not correspond to the current strategic choices.

The white-collar employees in this study tended to carefully evaluate their ideas before presenting them: If they felt that the arguments were not strong enough, the presentation was not convincing, or if they assumed that the idea would be badly received, they might not mention it at all. When the interviewees reflected on the lack of white-collar ideas, they also mentioned a fear of failure or of making a bad impression. This stresses the importance of encouraging people with less self-confidence or authority or without particular presentation skills, to propose their ideas nevertheless. Although unrefined and incremental, such ideas can lead into significant improvements once there are more people working on the issue.

On the other hand, ideas can also be too big in the sense that they imply a change in the current strategy, organisation or business concepts. The interviews indicated that at the moment such ideas have no befitting channel or forum in the studied organisation. As a consequence, these ideas don't reach the right audience. In addition, as it is, non-executive experts have little say in the company's strategic choices. Kanter (2006, 80—81) suggests the use of an "innovation pyramid" in order to exploit both big and small ideas:

The foundation consists of a continuous flow of incremental ideas. In the middle, there is a portfolio of promising ideas and at the top, a few well-selected, strategically significant projects. Ideas can change position in the pyramid as a seed of an idea turns out to have an unexpectedly big influence or when strategic projects generate incremental improvements as spin-offs.

In addition, it appears that time is a critical resource. Time is needed for the employees to refine their ideas, for the supervisors to provide feedback and for the decision-makers to evaluate ideas and organise the implementation. This is particularly important among the white-collar employees who prefer to present their ideas informally. As for the formal channel, the IMS has currently got a complementary status: Accepted ideas pay back and no dedicated resources are required. For idea coordinators and evaluation teams idea management is an additional responsibility. The interviewees could not justify taking time for developing their ideas and neglecting their daily responsibilities. Perhaps these observations reflect an overall understating attitude towards new ideas, which draws attention to the status of idea management. In conclusion, it appears that idea management can no longer be defined narrowly as a self-sufficient suggestion system that does not imply additional costs — especially if there is a desire to increase the number of informal ideas presented.

There are several implications for internal communication: First, the fact that proactive interviewees had internalised and identified with innovative behaviour, implies that, for those employees, who are currently not actively contributing with ideas, it is critical to communicate and signal the importance of innovative behaviour and its influence on over-all company performance. Second, as incremental innovations happen without much ado because white-collars have wider authority, there is a need to publish these results throughout the organisation. Internal communication of successes is a good way to acknowledge the idea generator, to drive the adoption of best practices, to elevate the status of idea management and to encourage others to participate.

6.4 Evaluation

One of the strengths of this study is that the 16 in-depth interviewees represented both supervisor and subordinate perspective. When investigating the efficacy of HR practices, the researcher should be aware that the practices and policies can be implemented and experienced in a very different manner than was intended (Alfes et al. 2013, 840). Hence, interviewing managers and HRM system designers only, could generate a distorted and overly positive picture of organisational reality. For example, Abstein and Spieth (2014) interviewed HR professionals in order to find out what kind of HRM system features support employee innovative behaviour. As a consequence, their findings are subject to

certain measurement bias, although the respondent selection was based the employer organisation's high innovation performance, which could be considered an objective measure. Similarly, while De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) interviewed 12 leaders from knowledge-intensive companies, they did not inquire the engineers, researchers and consultants working there how they perceived the prevailing managerial style.

What's more, De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) had a somewhat consultative approach in providing an inventory of managerial behaviours that encourage innovative behaviour. This research, on the other hand, was deeply grounded in self-determination theory and, therefore, reached a better balance between the theoretical and empirical aspects. However, self-determination theory has been extensively validated and tested elsewhere (Gagné & Deci 2005) and while confirming its propositions, this study yielded little entirely new knowledge about basic need satisfaction, autonomous motivation or their connection to innovative behaviour.

Nevertheless, this study contributed to the academic discussion with the notion that white-collar employees tend to prefer informal channels in promoting ideas. Consequently, even if a formal suggestion system was intended as a democratic and participative practice, it could convey a sense of control, subdue autonomous motivation and, thus, diminish self-initiated innovative action.

This study was immersed in fieldwork and it can be concluded that such a real life experience outweighs research conducted in a laboratory setting. Admittedly, in the turmoils of everyday business, the cause and effect relationships are not that obvious and there is a wide range of influencing factors and other potential explanations for the observed state of the matters. However, since white-collar innovative behaviour was observed as it naturally occurs — under conflicting demands and sometimes unnoticed — the managerial recommendations given herein are likely to be of practical value. On the other hand, the researcher's inherent interest in management problems possibly lead to too strong an emphasis on the managerial perspective. For example, this study would have benefitted from interviewing employee representatives, who could have argued, not just for themselves, but for a larger group of employees.

The fact that this was a commissioned study inevitably generates a bias. The researcher was met with a welcoming and respectful attitude and ample resources throughout the project. Oras Group could also be considered an appealing local employer for a student approaching graduation. As a consequence, when the interviewees occasionally referred to unfair treatment or conflict, such singular events did not change the researcher's overall positive impression of the commissioning organisation. Thus, this study assumed a fairly uncritical stance, which is one of its weaknesses considering that a critical aspect is typically part of constructivist research (Tienari & Meriläinen 2013, 117). For example, this study did not reflect what kind of power relations are maintained by the current idea management system. Nor did it investigate if there are two classes of citizens as Kanter (2006)

proposes: Innovators, who have all the fun and regular employees who do the hard work and must comply to rules and procedures.

There are some reservations about the dependability (Patton 2002, 546) of this study. The in-depth interviews were all different: The questions were presented in a different order and with a different wording; sometimes some were left out altogether as they appeared irrelevant, intruding or repetitive. At its best, this unstructured approach generated a confidential and personal account about innovative behaviour and at its worst, pages of fascinating but irrelevant conversation. Afterwards, it proved to be difficult to analyse what was common to these extremely unique cases.

As discussed before, the findings and conclusions of this study represent a subjective interpretation — one view of a multi-faceted, ever-changing reality. Hence, they cannot be generalised but they do yield a deeper insight into why white-collar employees engage in innovative activities and why they sometimes withdraw. Although the results may not be valid in a wider population, there is no doubt that this study captured and respected both the particularity of its cases as well as the multitude of perspectives that rose from them — as could be expected of a high-quality qualitative inquiry (Patton 2002, 544).

6.5 Future Research

The aim of this study was to explore the nature and the drivers and barriers of innovative behaviour in white-collar work. Therefore, a large, cross-sectional sample of interviewees was selected. Future studies would benefit from a sharper focus. For example, it appeared that the employees who work on the sales field remained quite distant to the home office and rarely made use of a suggestion system implanted in the company's intranet. Encouraging sales force innovative behaviour would perhaps require practices that were tailored for the particular characteristic of their work.

Previous surveys have typically measured the existence of HR practices that carry the features of high involvement or high performance (See, for example, Fu et al. 2015; Prieto & Perez-Santana 2014; Walswoth & Verna 2007). The level of innovative behaviour has then been assessed by the HR manager of the company or by its overall innovation performance. As a consequence, there is a lot of evidence of positive correlation between the two, but little detailed knowledge on how to design HR practices in aid of innovative behaviour. A longitudinal study on the efficacy of particular HR practices could yield useful new information. For example, in this study, there was little evidence that certain skills or abilities gained in training would have enhanced individual innovative behaviour. Such effects could, however, be evidenced in the long run in a larger sample. Similarly, the long-term effects of initiation or performance appraisal on employee innovative behaviour are not well-known. On the other hand, such practical concerns would perhaps

be better addressed with action research aimed at developing existing processes and practices so that they support informal idea generation, promotion and implementation.

With hindsight, a more critical approach on idea management could, in fact, explain why some good ideas never surface. Although a company-wide suggestion system appears democratic on the surface, are there pockets of inequity that are made to look self-evident and natural? On the other hand, this study assumed that all employee innovative behaviour is desirable and improves business performance. There is, however, a reason to believe that in some cases it could involve opportunistic motives or misjudgement. Be it with good or bad intentions, innovative behaviour can have disastrous consequences. What is interesting from a research point of view, is how the organisation and the management react to such misfortune: What are the negative aspects of innovative behaviour and what are the potential consequences?

This study did not attempt to determine the exact quality of individual motivation in relation to a particular task or phase of innovative behaviour. For such a purpose, a validated scale of innovation motivation would be required. This could follow the example of Scott, Fleming and Kelloway (2014) who developed and tested an “SDT Safety Motivation Scale” for investigating how differences in the quality of motivation affect safety behaviour at work. Several questions — analogical to those generated by Scott et al. — could be addressed with the help of such a tool. For example, it could be further clarified whether employees’ perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness affect their innovation motivation. Likewise, it would be interesting to know how supervisor’s innovation motivation impacts employee’s innovation motivation or whether idea management practices can, indeed, catalyse the internalisation of extrinsic innovation motivation.

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Discussions

- 13.11.2017 Kaisa Huunonen, Manager, Group HRD, Oras Group
- 16.3.2018 Kaisa Huunonen and Sakari Toivonen, Vice President, HR, Oras Group
- 23.5.2018 Katja Äärilä, Specialist, Management System, Oras Group
- 28.5.2018 Kaisa Huunonen and Sakari Toivonen
- 2.10.2018 Kaisa Huunonen and Sakari Toivonen
- 20.11.2018 Kaisa Huunonen
- 5.12.2018 Kaisa Huunonen and Sakari Toivonen

Observations and Documents

- Notes from an idea management meeting, Stuttgart
- Diary 2.10.2018 — 30.4.2019, Rauma, Stuttgart and Kralovice
- Oras Group (2019) Company internet page. <<https://www.orasgroup.com>>, retrieved 28.5.2019
- Oras Group, Oras Group Strategy 2018-2020
- Oras Group, People strategy
- Oras Group, Personal Development Discussion Form

APPENDIX

The following list presents the nodes applied in coding the interview data and the observation diary. The first number in brackets refers to the number of references, i.e. excerpts from the transcribed interviews. It is to be noted that several references within one node can stem from a single interview. In other words, an issue could be brought up repeatedly, but not necessarily by several interviewees. Consequently, the latter number stands for the number of interview or observation cases. The top nodes include all the references in the respective sub-nodes, but they also contain some items that did not fit into any of the categories below. In addition to the themes that follow Lepak et al. (2006) model, there are top nodes that cover emergent themes or reflection whilst coding.

- Ability (146, 16)
 - Idea generation (45, 13)
 - Developing between colleagues (22, 9)
 - External knowledge (9, 5)
 - Preparing idea (6, 4)
 - Problem solving (4, 3)
 - Taking distance (2, 1)
 - Idea promotion (50, 12)
 - Arguments and evidence (9, 8)
 - Social skills (10, 6)
 - Convincing managers (4, 3)
 - Presenting (3, 3)
 - Cross-functional perspective (44, 14)
 - Too little (11, 8)
 - Potential benefits (9, 6)
 - Positive experiences (2, 1)
 - Training (3, 2)
- Motivation (44, 14)
 - Introjected motivation (1, 1)
 - Identified extrinsic motivation (3, 2)
 - Integrated extrinsic motivation (6, 3)
 - Intrinsic motivation (4, 3)
 - Sense of autonomy (6, 5)
 - Sense of competence (15, 8)
 - Self-efficacy (7, 5)
 - Rewarding (9, 6)
- Opportunity (57, 15)

- Managerial support (31, 13)
- Feedback (14, 7)
- Production ownership (6, 5)
- Variety of tasks (5, 3)
- Organisational climate (76, 17)
 - Constructive criticism (13, 7)
 - Raising issues (20, 11)
 - Negative experiences (6, 4)
 - Breaking trust (6, 3)
 - Silos (13, 10)
 - Perceived expectations (16, 10)
 - Positive experiences (11, 8)
 - Good example (8, 69)
 - Uncertainty (13, 8)
 - Raw ideas (10, 7)
 - Values (7, 4)
- Reasons for no innovative behaviour (31, 12)
 - Discretion (11, 7)
 - Informal (7, 6)
 - No time or resources (19, 12)
- Definition of innovative behaviour (23, 11)
 - Development project (15, 11)
 - Idea case (11, 6)
- Links to business strategy (13, 6)
 - Too big an idea (6, 2)
- Development suggestions for the idea management system (31, 14)
- Interviewer comments
 - Reflection
 - Relevant questions
 - The absolute value of an idea
 - Understanding and clarifications