

Working Paper Series

**THE ROLE OF INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR IN ENHANCING
ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE: A STUDY OF THE
TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR IN THE UAE**

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Abstract

Over the last three decades, the business landscape has undergone a dramatic transformation, a shift underscored by the global challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The need to make organizations more resilient in this evolving environment has become a guiding principle in management practices. The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) oversees telecommunications and information technology in the UAE. The UAE has pursued several initiatives to engage various population segments by delivering accessible and interactive services that enhance societal well-being. This commitment has earned the UAE recognition as one of the top 15 digitally competitive nations globally in 2022. The findings of this study provide actionable insights for organizations in the UAE and beyond.

Keywords: *Employee Innovative Behavior, Organizational Resilience, Telecommunication Sector*

Introduction:

The global business landscape is undergoing rapid changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has prompted a surge of interest in Organizational Resilience (OR), which focuses on an organization's ability to adapt and grow during challenging times (Sincorá et al., 2023; Magnusson & Berggren, 2018). Resilient organizations can recover from crises promptly and maintain their operational performance even in persistent unfavorable circumstances (Safón et al., 2024). As described by Su and Junge (2023), innovation serves as a strategic mechanism that enhances an organization's resilience in the face of risks and uncertainties. Though distinct, innovation and resilience are mutually beneficial. During periods of

uncertainty, organizations that proactively invest tend to be more flexible and resilient (Engelen et al., 2024).

The connection between OR and innovation is primarily shaped by flexibility. Adaptive organizations respond to changes in technology and markets more effectively, controlling costs while efficiently utilizing resources to sustain competitive advantages (Engelen et al., 2024). Hillmann and Guenther (2021) emphasize stakeholders with strong relational ties as performance enhancers during periods of disruption. Alternatively, it has been described by Heredia et al. (2022) and Rehman et al. (2021) as a way to manage complexity through the optimization of financial, technical, and social resources. Resilient firms with capable management teams can capitalize on market gaps while their competitors struggle due to resource constraints (Tekletsion et al., 2024).

At the forefront of change in organizational innovation is individual innovation within the scope of organizational psychology (Bani et al., 2018). Ojo and Volkova (2023) suggest that individual innovation serves as the basis of organizational innovation, and its impact is differentiated by the degree of innovation level targeted. Innovation is defined as the adoption of new ideas, according to Bani et al. (2018). In contrast, Kanter (1988) speaks of the implementation side of the innovation process. Strategic benefits of innovation include delivering value to stakeholders by offering new products or services, as emphasized by Bani et al. (2018).

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) is one form of individual innovation, defined by Bani et al. (2018) as the intentional generation of new ideas and their application in the workplace. Creativity refers to the generation of ideas and innovation, their implementation, and is defined by Bani et al. (2018). Besides, Bani et al. (2018) also divide IWB into three phases: idea generation, promotion, and implementation, a model which Suhandiah et al. (2023) have updated for emerging markets.

Among the IWB antecedents are leadership (Bani et al., 2018), autonomy (Suhandiah et al., 2023), cognition (Bani et al., 2018), organizational support (Nugroho & Ranihusna, 2020), and organizational climate (Bani et al., 2018). IWB has a positive impact on organizational performance in highly dynamic contexts, also enabling personal contributions to be integrated with strategic objectives (Suhandiah et al., 2023). There is rich literature on OR and IWB separately, but the crossover is relatively thin. This gap is expected to provide new avenues for understanding resilience in innovation.

To navigate and thrive in an increasingly shifting business landscape, firms must demonstrate agility, adaptability, and resilience (Su & Jung, 2023). The market disruption witnessed in recent years has made employee creativity more valuable than ever as it leverages an organization's IWB, which allows a company to maintain its competitive advantage (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023). IWB involves significant human capital development and utilization. Talent management, organizational culture, and innovation are crucial to establishing a leadership framework that enables firms to maximize employee potential and foster creativity (Bani et al., 2018).

As noted by Rehman et al. (2021), traditional models of innovation focus solely on advancements in technology, often neglecting the integral role that people play in fostering innovation. The IWB body of research seeks to fill this void by concentrating on innovation as a function of leadership, organizational climate, autonomy, and feedback. Consideration of these factors within innovation frameworks contributes to more enduring innovation outcomes and helps inform decisions on resource allocation, organizational design, and talent management (Sandhu & Naqbi, 2023). There is evidence that IWB is efficacious in improving employee engagement, helping align individuals with organizational objectives, and strengthening resilience (Suhandiah et al., 2023). Ultimately, investigating the IWB and OR

relationship enables better preparation for uncertainty, which in turn supports sustained organizational growth (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023).

An innovative organizational climate is critical for fostering innovative behavior. Bani et al. (2018) describe this climate as one in which knowledge workers are encouraged to express their creative ideas and thoughts. Innovative behavior does not occur in a vacuum; it is influenced by management and contextual factors. For instance, Bani et al. (2018) established a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' IWB. Despite these theoretical perspectives, a considerable gap remains in the literature. To the author's knowledge, no research has focused on the impact of leadership, autonomy, feedback, and innovation climate on IWB in the telecommunications industry in the UAE.

This industry is vital in light of the UAE's strategic initiatives to diversify its economy and reduce its dependence on oil revenues (Bani et al., 2018). The UAE is a major player in the MENA telecommunications and information technology (ICT) ecosystem, as it seeks to develop a competitive knowledge-based economy supported by infrastructure investments and sustained by innovation spending (UAE Ministry of Economy, 2020; Bani et al., 2018). Such advancements provide a unique opportunity to examine the relationship between employee innovation and organizational effectiveness, particularly in the telecommunications sector (Bani et al., 2018).

The scope of innovation encompasses the development of new products, as well as new processes, methods, and service models in various fields, including IT, telecommunications, education, and banking (Bani et al., 2018). While the service industries are beginning to recognize the importance of employee innovation, the factors that drive such behavior remain largely unexplored (Bani et al., 2018). Organizational leaders continue to actively seek strategies for fostering continuous innovation, as innovative skills are fundamental to an organization's agility.

A significant gap remains in measuring and leveraging innovation to foster organizational resilience in the United Arab Emirates' telecommunication industry (Bani et al., 2018). Regarding these gaps, innovation is impacted by the alignment of its goals with the environment, economy, and societal frameworks, which form the basis of this study. Furthermore, IWB is influenced by factors such as role ambiguity, job overload, autonomy, feedback, and resilience, among others (Nugroho & Ranihusna, 2020).

Conceptual Review of Organizational Resilience (OR)

Organizational resilience (OR), although it has origins in psychology, is gaining traction in the business and management disciplines. As Bani et al. (2018) point out, the streams of resilience research include reacting to challenges, organizational dependability, personnel skills, versatile model innovation, and risk management in business networks. Each stream has its own set of definitions and models. This review examines resilience as an organizational construct by integrating information from various streams to provide a more comprehensive understanding of its complexity.

Resilience at the Individual and Organizational Level

The primary perspectives on resilience in organizational research have emerged from Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) and Positive Organizational Behavior (POB), which themselves derive from positive psychology. This branch of psychology focuses on cultivating experiences and human qualities rather than merely addressing deficiencies (Lenny Koh et al., 2023). As pointed out by Heredia et al. (2022), positive psychology has three underpinning elements: subjective experience, individual strengths, and supportive institutions. While these elements help explain the development of resilience, they are not pivotal to this study's framework of OR.

Both POS and POB have investigated resilience at the individual and organizational levels. At the organizational level, Marlon et al. (2018) adapted individual constructs such as assets and risk. Assets, which include an organization's knowledge, skills, trust, and even commitment, can improve problem-solving and counteract susceptibility to dysfunctions (Bani et al., 2018). Firms face specific challenges, such as restructuring or downsizing, which are often viewed as routine operational adjustments (Hillmann & Guenther, 2021). In contrast, resilient organizations are those that cope with unpredictable disruptions and rely on cognitive, emotional, relational, or structural resources (Duchek, 2020). Individual resilience is perceived as a dynamic process, rather than a static characteristic.

Bani et al. (2018) describe resilience as one's ability to absorb stress while simultaneously maintaining or enhancing performance during stressful situations. Similarly, workplace resilience is defined by Engelen et al. (2024) as a pathway for professional development enabled by adversity. Bani et al. (2018) expand this further by considering resilience as the capacity to pursue challenges and undergo personal growth, thereby transforming the quest for skills and meaning.

Empirical attempts to foster resilience have recently begun. Bani et al. (2018) applied training interventions designed to enhance rational thinking, emotional control, and decision-making under stress in students and management personnel. These sessions yielded significant improvements in resilience and related psychological capital among the test groups, with no changes observed in the control groups. Despite these findings, methods for developing resilience in individuals remain understudied. The literature tends to focus on two perspectives: recovery from specific adverse events (Heredia et al., 2022) and overarching processes that develop or build resilience over time, albeit more gradually (Evenseth et al., 2022).

At the organizational level, resilience emerges from the combination of specific capabilities acquired through experience (Bani et al., 2018). It is the dynamic capability of an

organization, as emphasized by Lenny Koh et al. (2023), that is shaped over the long term through continuous learning and adaptation. Building a responder organization requires a systematic approach to cultivating learning that equips the organization to address unfolding challenges.

This research builds upon Duchek (2020) and Safón et al. (2024) by interpreting organizational resilience as a proactive organizational capability that reflects an organization's anticipatory posture towards uncertainty. Along with Teece (2018), more clarity is needed on a given issue, as this author pointed out. Sürücü et al. (2023) advocate for the need to perceive resilience as multidimensional, particularly the proactive resilience aspect, which they subdivide into two critical components. Duchek (2020) distinguishes outward and inward-looking perspectives. The inward-looking dimension refers to a firm's internal drive to endure and adapt over time, which is characteristic of public, private, family, and even non-family firms. Advocating for this simplified, long-term-oriented dimension is crucial to deepen the understanding of proactive resilience.

Thus, proactive Organizational Resilience (OR) refers to an organization's ability to anticipate and identify both internal and external factors, and respond to them strategically to ensure survival. As noted, it demands forecasting and resource allocation to make provision for unpredictable circumstances (Tekletsion et al., 2024; Duchek, 2020).

Organizational Innovation

Organizational innovation refers to the implementation of new methods in business processes, workplace organization, or external relations, aimed at enhancing performance (Bani et al., 2018). Such innovations aim to improve non-advertised assets, such as tacit knowledge, reduce administrative or transaction costs, enhance employee satisfaction and productivity, and lower supply costs. This encompasses domains such as leadership, management processes, strategic human resource management, learning mechanisms, and

corporate communication. As defined by Sincorá et al. (2023), innovations may be “new-to-the-world” or “new-to-the-firm.” According to Bani et al. (2018), such innovations may range from incremental process modifications to complete organizational overhauls.

Shah et al. (2023) identify organizational innovation as the creation or adoption of new ideas or behaviors within an organization, with a central emphasis on the transformation of knowledge. Sayegh (2014) offers a broader synthesis, as it encompasses the adoption and assimilation of new elements that may carry new social and economic value, such as new markets, production methods, or management systems. Thus, innovation serves both as a process and as an outcome (Shah & ElGohary, 2023), aiding in adaptation to technological and market shifts (Tekletsion et al., 2024). In any case, organizational innovation enables the transformation of ideas into valuable services, products, or processes (Shah & ElGohary, 2023), further emphasizing the importance of innovation for the organization when employees are aligned with its goals.

Types of Innovation

Grasping the various types of innovation fosters an understanding of organizational practice (Shah & ElGohary, 2023). According to Marlon et al., product, process, marketing, and organizational innovation are four categories outlined in OECD’s Oslo Manual (2005). Tekletsion et al. (2024) define product innovation as the comprehensive enhancement of goods or services that incorporates new technologies and configurations, undergoes substantial shifts due to changes in customer needs, and is subject to severe international competition. It necessitates vigorous partnerships with customers and suppliers.

Process innovation centers on significant refinement of production and delivery methods to lower costs and enhance product value (Marlon et al., 2018). These processes have ambiguous impacts concerning employment (Sürücü et al., 2023). Marketing innovation encompasses the fundamental changes in and introduction of new techniques to the promotion,

pricing, packaging, and placement of products (Marlon et al., 2018), which are also the four pillars of marketing (Suhandiah et al., 2023).

Every organization relies on individual innovation (Robinson et al., 2024), where incremental ventures are individualistic in nature while radical ones take a collective form (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023; Prayag et al., 2018). The role of creativity as a driver of change is crucial in the generation, promotion, and implementation of ideas (Su & Junge, 2023; Rehman et al., 2021; Ojo & Volkova, 2023). It is also important in bolstering support, persuasion, and alliance formation, which are critical to achieving successful change (Magnusson & Berggren, 2018; Heredia et al., 2022; Messmann & Mulder, 2020; Nugroho & Ranihusna, 2020).

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

The definition of IWB was first introduced by Scott and Bruce in 1994 and has since received increasing scholarly attention. Despite increasing empirical investigation, conceptual clarity remains underdeveloped. Many research studies are inconsistent, diverging in methodology and often citing Bani et al. (2018) or Janssen (2000) without proper attribution, as noted by Magnusson and Berggren (2018) and Lee et al. (2021). This gap hinders the formation of a universally accepted definition. The purpose of this section is to critically analyze the various definitions and dimensions of IWB and address the methods used to measure it.

A Review of Key Definitions of IWB

The most frequently referenced definition of IWB is provided by Bani et al. (2018), which highlights the application and creativity of novel concepts for positive change. This interpretation emphasizes that innovation, in any context, must bring about a positive change. However, this reliance on outcomes as the basis for IWB has its shortcomings. If the criterion

for an innovation is its success, then any endeavors that do not result in success—no matter how much work was put in—would not be considered innovative. This contradicts the IWB construct, which suggests that innovation should focus on behavior, in this case, intention, rather than its aftermath (Bani et al., 2018). Hence, IWB must be defined based on intention and effort, not outcomes.

The emphasis on application overlooks the cyclical, arduous, and often chaotic nature of innovation, which includes setbacks and discontinuity (Bani et al., 2018). IWB involves behaviors within all innovation phases, including idea generation, seeking support, and implementation, which may occur at varying levels of participation (Nugroho & Ranihusna, 2020). There are multiple proposed structures, varying from two dimensions (Bani et al., 2018) to five dimensions (Bani et al., 2018).

IWB is neither always linear nor complete. Employees might engage in different phases of innovation at different times, which requires distinct skill sets (Evenseth et al., 2022). More recently, definitions have focused on positive outcomes (Duchek, 2020; Ebrahim et al., 2023), attempting to resolve concerns about outcome dependency and multidimensionality. Nevertheless, attention to relative novelty, as well as the partial nature of IWB, remains a notable omission.

Also, there is a debate about whether IWB is intra- or extra-role behavior. It is primarily considered an extra-role behavior (Lee et al., 2021; Prayag et al., 2018); however, some argue that it incorporates both intra- and extra-role elements based on job descriptions and organizational norms (Nkomo & Kalisz, 2023). There is strong evidence supporting the use of IWB with designated innovation roles in a job (Sayegh, 2014). Therefore, IWB is best described as a broad behavioral construct encompassing incremental and radical innovation across multiple levels and diverse contexts.

Dimensions of IWB

According to Ojo and Volkova (2023), IWB can be divided into two key stages: initiation and implementation. Building upon Bani et al.'s (2018) work, many scholars note the importance of individual innovation within the organizational context. Stage-based models facilitate the analysis of innovation behavior across various types of organizations (Nugroho & Ranihusna, 2020; Prayag et al., 2018).

Problem recognition, idea generation, idea promotion, and implementation represent the four core stages identified by Shah et al. (2023). As explained by Shah et al. (2023), every innovation has a starting point, often a problem or an opportunity. They may arise from unexpected events, performance gaps, shifts in demographics, or newly acquired knowledge (Sayegh, 2014; Teece, 2018). Sürücü et al. (2023) describe idea generation as the creation of novel solutions, equated to “kaleidoscopic thinking”.

Once ideas have been generated, they need to be promoted or championed, especially when they challenge the status quo (Valkhof & Adi, 2024). Champions are critical to garnering support and advancing innovations (Teece, 2018; Wang & Zhao, 2024). The final stage is implementation, which involves integrating new ideas through execution, testing, modification, or development of products and processes (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023).

Measuring IWB

Scott and Bruce (1994) first proposed the IWB scale as a one-dimensional construct that included three components: idea generation, coalition building, and realization. Other scholars also employed unidimensional IWB frameworks (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023; Saleh, 2024). Sincorá et al. (2023) employ a multidimensional approach, focusing on idea generation, promotion, and implementation; however, due to high intercorrelation, a combined scale was formed. These studies, together with Valkhof and Adi (2024), which

distinguish between idea generation and implementation, align with Sincorá et al.'s conclusions.

More recent work (Sürücü et al., 2023) mentions several dimensions but does not empirically distinguish them. The IWB frameworks cited in this study are less multidimensional due to a lack of construct validity, excessive reliance on single-dimensional frameworks, and overemphasis on the IWB as an outcome variable rather than a focal construct (Suhandiah et al., 2023). Many studies rely on self-report data with no objective or multi-source ratings evaluation (Sincorá et al., 2023). There is a need for further research to refine multidimensional IWB frameworks, thereby enhancing the rigor of empirical work in this area.

Factors Affecting IWB

Numerous factors, alongside organizational and individual contexts, influence the implementation of IWB. These attributes, including culture, leadership, individuality, and emotions, significantly impact innovation within an organization (Sürücü et al., 2023; Tekletsion et al., 2024).

Leadership is critical in fostering IWB. Effective leaders facilitate the transmission of ideas, support autonomy, resource provision, and nurture creativity (Koh et al., 2023; Magnusson & Berggren, 2018; Prayag et al., 2018). Leadership during periods of change requires employees to be empowered (Messmann & Mulder, 2020), and adopting participative behavior is essential (Bani et al., 2018). Nonetheless, leadership can also inhibit innovation by blocking the expression of political ideologies or hindering the provision of resources (Duchek, 2019). Creative leadership, which encompasses transformational and self-leadership styles, fosters innovation by offering intellectual stimulation and autonomy through generous guidance (Baumane-Vītoliņa et al., 2022).

Support from colleagues is imperative, and resistance to change is a common occurrence (Bani et al., 2018). Innovators must empathize with their colleagues, articulating

their perspectives and aligning their interests to gain support (Ebrahim et al., 2023). Relationships characterized by trust and mutual respect enhance knowledge sharing while collaboration (Bani et al., 2018). On the other hand, low-quality relationships hinder IWB due to limited engagement and support (Liu et al., 2021).

Autonomy enables a degree of self-directed exploration and reduces bureaucratic constraints, which fosters innovation (Messmann & Mulder, 2020; Marlon et al., 2018). It increases motivation and the proclivity to innovate among the workforce (Liu et al., 2021). Nkomo and Kalisz (2023) and Siregar et al. (2021) affirm a strong positive relationship between autonomy and performance, as well as IWB. Employees are more likely to offer valuable suggestions when they work in flexible settings (Ojo & Volkova, 2023).

Employees who are committed to the organization feel a sense of responsibility for the organization's achievements, which makes them more likely to engage in IWB (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023; Robinson et al., 2024). A sense of belonging fosters allegiance, increases productivity, and inspires creativity (Nnamdi & Onuoha, 2020; Safón et al., 2024). HR practices communicate to employees an expectation of innovation. Employees' behaviors are influenced through compensation, recognition, and training (Safón et al., 2024). IWB is reinforced; thus, engagement is encouraged even when perceived risks are present (Duchek, 2020; Fathi et al., 2021). Training and development are designed to enhance human capital, which demonstrates an organization's commitment to its employees (Iftikhar et al., 2021; Heredia et al., 2022). Overly restrictive cultures are detrimental to these (Nkomo & Kalisz, 2023).

Feedback helps clarify goals and assess methods (Nugro Gomez & Runihusna, 2020). Providing positive feedback enhances confidence and engagement, while constructive feedback motivates innovation (Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, Completed, 2023). Supervisor feedback enhances self-efficacy in creativity (Lee et al., 2021) and trust, which is

pivotal for IWB (Kaymakcı et al., 2022). There is, however, a lack of research on the connection between feedback and IWB (Ebrahim et al., 2023).

Individual Context Factors

A strong sense of confidence, optimism, and hope helps individuals overcome fear of failure—and increase their willingness to take risks (Liu et al., 2021; Marlon et al., 2018). Moreover, these emotions enable innovators to take losses in stride, fostering greater overall learning and adaptability in the future (Nkomo & Kalisz, 2023; Lenny Koh et al., 2023). Resilience, the capacity to bounce back and adapt to changes, also enables innovators to overcome numerous challenges (Kumar et al., 2021). Commitment to robust growth drives innovators across all levels, from idea generation to execution (Iftikhar et al., 2021).

Cognitive skills and an inclination toward thoughtful reflection, along with conscientiousness, have been found to foster IWB (Magnusson & Berggren, 2018; Safón et al., 2024). These competencies, along with their practical application, need to be integrated into training frameworks (Suhandiah et al., 2023; Wang & Zhao, 2024). Equally important is measuring the effectiveness of innovation strategies and using reflective practices to improve on them (Bani et al., 2018).

The availability of resources, including relevant skills, time, and support, affects employee innovation engagement (Sandhu & Naqbi, 2023; Yudiatmaja et al., 2023). The influence of job demands, security, or financial incentives is less specific, however (Sayegh, 2014). For example, while time constraints may hinder the generation of ideas, they may facilitate their implementation (Messmann & Mulder, 2020).

Self-efficacy, or belief in one's capabilities, drives persistence and innovation (Valkhof & Adi, 2024; Wang & Zhao, 2024). Proactive persons offer ideas, take initiative, and resolve issues, which makes them essential innovators (Saleh, 2024; Sayegh, 2014).

Theoretical Review

At the micro level, organizational resilience is influenced by the behaviors, attitudes, and actions of individuals. Bani et al. (2018) divided theories of resilience into four categories: managerial, organization-environmental, and social capital. The response to COVID-19 served as a case study for contemporary supply chains, highlighting them as complex adaptive systems and illustrating “jury-rigging” solutions that demonstrated Ashby’s law of requisite variety (Engelen et al., 2024). Both the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) and Hart’s NRBV (1995) emphasize configurations of resources for resilience, while dynamic capabilities (Kumar et al., 2021) provide means for strategic adaptation. Strategic responses that demand substantial shifts in resources enhance resilience more than tactical responses (Hillmann & Guenther, 2021). Responses to disruption are strengthened if there has been previous exposure to disruption (Evenseth et al., 2022), and the mobilization of resources—materials, technology, and social capital—is important (Bani et al., 2018).

Resilience Theory

Initially rooted in psychology and ecology (Werner, 1977), the concept of resilience theory now permeates the business literature. It incorporates crisis anticipation, coping, and adaptation (Duchek, 2020). Fathi et al. (2021) focus on recovery. In contrast, Bani et al. (2018) shift the focus from recovery to leveraging change, emphasizing transformation and improvement in the face of adversity. Koh et al. (2023) delineate five resilience modes: avoidance, absorption, elasticity, learning, and rejuvenation, describing different organizational responses. As interpreted by Lenny Koh et al. (2023), resilience is predominantly viewed as recovery; others see it as strategic innovation.

In a single piece, Linnenluecke (2013) advanced Organizational Resilience (OR) theory, focusing on adaptive/buffering capacities, which include components such as open boundaries, sustainability values, and structural inputs. This construct is theoretically sound so

far, but challenges remain in applying it to empirical cases. Understanding how organizations deploy these components in practice is essential for enhancing the model's practical value.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which identifies three fundamental psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—as central to motivation and well-being. Initially practiced in the educational sector, it has now been applied in the corporate world to enhance employee motivation, productivity, innovation, and creativity (Heredia et al., 2022). Organizations strive to fulfill these needs through training and development opportunities, flexible working arrangements, and meaningful work assignments, which, in turn, increase their satisfaction and performance.

With SDT, six mini-theories exist that explain various motivational aspects, including learning and resilience. Research on the topic has shown (Fathi et al., 2021) that employees who experience higher levels of autonomy and competence also demonstrate higher levels of resilience to difficulties, which connects SDT to innovative and adaptive organizational behaviors. On the other hand, there is a gap in the literature exploring the impact of SDT in different organizational settings (Heredia et al., 2022).

Dynamic Capability View

Teece (1997) defines dynamic capability as the ability of an organization to reconfigure resources in changing environments. Teece et al. (1997) outline three components: adaptive, absorptive, and innovative capabilities. Market potential, organizational flexibility, and learning are also included by Bani et al. (2018).

This aligns resilience with dynamic capabilities; both aim for competitive advantage through adaptation (Bani et al., 2018). While resilience focuses on responding to and surviving a crisis, dynamic capabilities concern themselves with long-term exploitation of opportunities

(Romani-Torres & Norena-Chavez, 2023). Flexibility, organizational learning, and innovation are key elements to both concepts. Companies that fail to diagnose or adapt to vulnerabilities may experience diminished capabilities (Iftikhar et al., 2021); however, maintaining intense routines and second-order capabilities can foster persistent growth (Magnusson & Berggren, 2018). The combination of dynamic capabilities and resilience creates a more complete structure for organizational persistence and adaptability (Kaymakcı et al., 2022).

Social Exchange Theory

Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET) describes the reciprocal exchanges of tangible and intangible goods. Within an organization, employees participate in reciprocal exchange relationships with employers, providing support and resources in return for recognition of their performance, commitment, and innovation (Prayag et al., 2018). Effective HR practices, as well as reliable signals of organizational values, motivate employees to think innovatively (Sandhu & Naqbi, 2023).

Organizational climate determines the success of this exchange. Highly rigid climates may stifle innovation, which in turn can damage social exchange (Sayegh, 2014). While Agency Theory typically emphasizes self-serving actions, SET offers a contrasting relationship perspective, focusing on trust, loyalty, and mutual benefit (Lenny Koh et al., 2023). Although criticisms regarding theoretical precision abound, SET remains one of the most practical and versatile theories in organizational research (Nnamdi & Onuoha, 2020).

Economic Contribution of the Telecommunication Sector of the UAE

Under the monitoring of Mordor Intelligence, the UAE's telecommunications sector has become a regional leader, with a marked shift in the sector's advancement attributed to the TDRA (Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority). UAE initiatives, such as being the first in the Arab world to launch a 5G network, further strengthen global

competitiveness in other areas (Bani et al., 2018). The UAE continues to excel in IoT and AI, thanks to government-backed initiatives such as Smart Dubai and the AI Strategy. Projected revenues from AI for the UAE in the coming years are expected to exceed \$1.4 billion by 2025 (UAE Ministry of Economy, 2020). This innovation-driven ecosystem is also favorable for telecommunications companies Etisalat and Du.

As explained by Bani et al. (2018), innovation is crucial to the UAE's Vision 2021 and National Innovation Strategy (NIS), which aims to transform the economy into a knowledge-based one by investing in research, science, and entrepreneurship. The enabling innovation- and technology-driven telecommunications and ICT sectors enhance governance, economic integration, and quality of life (Nnamdi & Onuoha, 2020). The UAE's significant spending in fiber optics, 5G, innovative city technologies, and other infrastructure has positively impacted service provision and business productivity. Government digitization (90% of services offered online), coupled with high-speed internet, enhances e-commerce and general public services (Bani et al., 2018). Telecoms have recovered strongly after the pandemic, with tourism and innovative city initiatives driving growth.

Telecom firms encounter greater risks as the world becomes increasingly dependent on digital technology. Integrating resiliency within operations is crucial in meeting service level agreements (Bani et al., 2018). Creativity from employees ensures innovation, which, in turn, drives competitive advantage and helps maintain a certain level of service quality (Saleh, 2024). To maintain growth and retain their top position in the market, telecom companies must nurture innovative behavior as they respond to growing customer and market demands (Prayag et al., 2018).

Conclusion

The transition to Industry 5.0 signifies a shift from prioritizing shareholders to integrating human-centered, stakeholder-centric, and more cohesive frameworks that combine

the application of futuristic technologies with sustainable practices (Suhandiah et al., 2023). It has been suggested that organizations must go beyond classical risk management and move toward developing capabilities for building resilience (Teece, 2018). Moreover, there are sector-wide impacts of specific threats that require more comprehensive strategic approaches, as seen in humanitarian logistics and disaster scenarios (Valkhof & Adi, 2024).

One gap worth investigating further is the differences in organizational resilience between industries and how the characteristics of production systems impact resilience capacity (Bani et al., 2018). While many strategies to enhance resilience focus on supply chain complexity (Bani et al., 2018), there is a need to devise strategies that address the specific operational characteristics (Robinson et al., 2024). In response, many scholars are stressing the need to measure and capture resilience through actionable strategies and frameworks (Marlon et al., 2018).

Given the lack of a deep explanation of the underlying mechanisms, specifically regarding IWB, most existing studies using quantitative surveys seem to have a methodological flaw. On the other side of the spectrum, qualitative approaches with their ability to “capture” context often generalize. Thus, it is suggested that a mixed-methods approach be adopted to explore the interplay between resilience and IWB, given their breadth and depth.

Innovation serves as the cornerstone for sustainable development and differentiation in the telecom market (Nkomo & Kalisz, 2023). Focused on driving value for consumers as a market strategy, telecom operators during industry maturity phases concentrate on innovation in offerings (Rehman et al., 2021; Prayag et al., 2018). Despite the innovation-dominated nature of the sector, there is a scarcity of research investigating the drivers of IWB in telecom organizations (Robinson et al., 2024; Saleh, 2024).

While gaining popularity in academic research, IWB suffers from a lack of clear conceptual boundaries and practical frameworks for measurement. Additionally, the inherently

experimental process of innovation makes it difficult for organizations to cultivate it in a structured way. The goal of this study is to close these gaps by investigating the relationship between resilience and IWB in the telecom sector, thereby providing guidance for strategically nurturing innovation and enhancing organizational agility in shifting landscapes. The researcher recommends testing the variables empirically, as the study's findings will benefit organizations, policymakers, and government bodies.

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