THE ROLE OF TRUST IN ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATIVENESS

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M.Sc. (Econ.) Riikka Ellonen
D.Sc. (Econ.) Kirsimarja Blomqvist
D.Sc. (Tech.) Kaisu Puimalainen
Lappeenranta University of Technology
Technology Business Research Center and Department of Business Administration

ABSTRACT

The role of trust in innovativeness has been discussed in several studies, yet empirical quantitative research is only emerging. The aim of our study is to analyse the effect of organisational trust on organisational innovativeness. This study contributes both to the literature on organisational innovativeness, as well as to the emerging theory on trust. More specifically, in this study we approach organisational trust as consisting of both personal and impersonal types of trust. In addition, we approach organisational innovativeness as a multidimensional concept. In the empirical part of the study we show the relationship between various types of trust and dimensions of organisational innovativeness.

Trust is conceptualised as a multidimensional construct through the positive expectations individuals have about the competence, reliability and benevolence of organisational members as well as institutional trust within organisation. Organisational innovativeness is defined and studied as an outcome and manifestation of innovative actions and results (product-, process-, market-, process-, behaviour- and strategic innovativeness).

Our quantitative empirical analysis is based on a survey of 40 organisational units and 214 respondents within ICT and paper & pulp- industries. As a result of this study the impact of different types of organisational trust on the dimensions of organisational innovativeness is analysed. Our preliminary results imply that especially institutional trust has an important role in determining organisational innovativeness.

1 Corresponding author: Riikka Ellonen, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Technology Business Research Center, P.O. Box 20, 53851 Lappeenranta Finland, e-mail: Riikka.Ellonen@lut.fi, tel: +358 5621 6665, fax: +3585 621 6699