



Impact of Organizational Inertia on Employee Innovative Behavior

submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Organizations rely on employees to innovate in processes, methods and operations, because employees are the basic cells of the organization and play a fundamental role in organizational innovation.

Since ideas are the foundation of innovation, these are generated by employees, who "develop, carry, react to and modify ideas". So the need to demonstrate innovative behaviors from employees, that it aids businesses in remaining competitive and adapt quickly to changes. However, to adopt the innovation process in any organization, inertia to change is a substantial barrier, and its role has

not been examined completely. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of organizational inertia on employee innovative behavior. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 353 teachers (with 90.93% response rate). Multiple Regression analysis was employed to test the research hypotheses using the software (SPSS V.25). The study findings showed that there is a significant negative impact of organizational inertia on employee innovative behavior. Also, theoretical and practical implications were presented in addition to future research suggestions.

Key-Words: - Organizational Inertia, Employee Innovative Behavior, Multiple Regression Analysis.

1. Introduction

Educational sector faces economic, social, politic and technologic changes. In this case, schools must be flexible to adapt to new circumstances and changing contexts (Sagnak, 2012). Given the dynamic nature of business environment, sustained success requires not only having assets that are hard to replicate but also ownership of unique and dynamically talents such as innovative and effective teachers who are the pillars of the teaching and learning process as well as the key to progress of any educational system (Teofilus et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023). Practically, because it is an open system, educational organizations should constantly be prepared for change and have the power to adapt quickly and effectively to changes experienced due to their social mission (Akpolat, 2023), but there are usually barriers to change (Naghavi et al., 2021). Since, with the driving force created by technological and social changes for the transformation of educational organizations, it brings with them situations of uncertainty (Akpolat, 2023), which make organizations don't always innovate and resist learning, change and tries to maintain the status quo for practices, investments or attitude, which causes them to fall into trap of immobile. Over time, these organizations will experience organizational inertia and eventually

organizational inefficiency (Rajaei and Asadzadeh, 2021). Additionally, organizational inertia is regarded as a hindrance to effective and more comprehensive transformation, since creating new and beneficial ideas is a critical aspect for organizational innovation to address several opportunities and challenges, but when inertia ingrained in an enterprise, individuals desire to respond instantly depending on their competence and expertise, implying that the primary obstacle to innovation may be inertia (AlKayid et al., 2023).

Public Secondary Schools in educational sector in Egypt, Mansoura city were selected as the population of this study due to its importance in the country's technological and scientific development, as the learning and education sector constitutes one of the unique systems in any society, and are of great importance for realizing social, cultural and economic goals which raises its position to the level of entrepreneurship among local organizations and make its relationship with the local community that embraces it of a dynamic and influential nature. While, this study responds to the call urging further work on inertia and innovation, Since (Jafari et al., 2019) stated that few research has been conducted on organizational inertia and innovation, whereas some researchers such (Huang et al., 2013; Jafari et al., 2019; Moradi et al., 2021) put their focus on how organizational inertia affect organization's innovative activities (such as business model innovation and open innovation), which means that previous studies neglected the basis of foundation innovative activities whose employees that are responsible for innovation process which passes from idea generation to idea promotion to idea implementation and impact of organizational inertia and it's dimensions on the stages of this process, which reveals that there is no study that clarifies the impact of organizational inertia on employee innovative behavior, so this study seeks to focus on this relationship, which represent the research gap and the main focus of this research.

2. Research Background

2.1. Organizational Inertia

Wu et al., (2023) stated that inertia was introduced into the field of management by Hannan & Freeman, (1977; 1984), the originators of organizational inertia theory, developed a dynamic model that demonstrated the relationship between organizational inertia and change, starting with the idea that organizations are change-resistant complex systems by nature, with structural change being at least as risky as inaction, Hannan et al., (2005) believe that the origin of organizational inertia is firms' accountability and reliability (Nedzinskas et al., 2013), that is, organizations which adopt inertia or "reproducibility" by institutionalizing and standardizing processes, organizational goals and routinized activities are better able to meet reliability and accountability requirements, which provide organizations with advantage of reliability and stability. Whereas, the term "inertia" is derived from the Latin word "Iners", which means idle or lazy (Sillic, 2019; Hasnawi and Abbas, 2020; Moradi et al., 2021). While sociologists utilized the concept of inertia in physics as a "metaphor" for describing how difficult it is to change organizational structure and the stickiness of established patterns of thinking, behavior or activities in organizations (Hur et al., 2019).

On the other hand, Singh and Lumsden, (1990) who introduced the concept of "organizational inertia" by using organizational ecology theory in order to explain the complex relationship between an organization and its environment, as well as phenomenon, that is not easily changed in response to environmental changes. Ebrahimi, (2016); Teofilus et al., (2022) stated that the terms "organizational flexibility" and "organizational inertia" are contradictory, whereas flexibility has an advantageous effects, as organizations that are highly flexible outperform others, on the other hand inertia and inflexibility are typically viewed as inherently detrimental for organizations, and could be manifest in various ways, like suppression of critical information, rigid regulations and excessive commitment to the organization.

According to, Rumelt, (1995) organizational inertia referred to the inability to change forms, processes, or procedures as well as the strong persistence of current form and function. In addition to, organizational inertia is determined as a significant barrier to the development of innovative techniques, the strength and resistance that the organization shows against environmental changes (Sepahvand et al., 2017). Moradi et al., (2021): Teofilus et al., (2022) defined organizational inertia as the result of an organization that continues to operate with status quo for a long time while failing to respond in timely manner to conditions and situations that are constantly changing and unstable. Li et al., (2023) viewed organizational inertia as an internal organizational power that prevents organizations from changing, adapting, and developing in response to a changing environment, such as global digital transformation, in relation to management, products, manufacturing, marketing, culture and economic policies, this power prefers stability over change and uncertainty. In accordance with (Huang et al., 2013) organizational inertia has three dimensions include insight inertia, action inertia and psychological inertia which are described in the following;

2.1.1. Insight Inertia

When there is a time lag between significant environmental changes and organizational awareness of them, insight inertia appears (Huang et al., 2013; Rajaei and Asadzadeh, 2021). Godkin & Allcorn, (2008); Akpolat, (2023) defined this problem as follows, the organization's delay in adapting to the demands of environmental changes as a result of not being able to read the environmental signals in time. Moreover, insight inertia represents an interruption in organizational learning cycle, as prevents organizations to learn from their experiences (Sulphrey and Jasim, 2022).

2.1.2. Action Inertia

According to, Rajaei and Asadzadeh, (2021) action inertia occurs when managerial responses to environmental changes are too slow. In addition, the results of the efforts to effect change will not be beneficial due to it does not appear in time (Huang et al., 2013). In contrast to insight inertia, action inertia emerges after conducting an environmental survey and analysis (Hedberg & Ericson, 1997). Allcorn & Godkin, (2011); Ebrahimi, (2016) introduces various factors contribute to action inertia, including a state of role-constrained learning arises when individuals' role in solving the problems at hand is limited and cannot reasonably act on the knowledge they have of the environment (Karayel, 2020), where individuals have possessed knowledge necessary to perform the work, but are unable to act on newly acquired knowledge and can't convince others into changing their behavior, thus the cycle of learning is interrupted (Godkin, 2010).

2.1.3. Psychological Inertia

Blázquez-Alonso et al., (2021) defined it as the inevitability of behaving in a certain way, as a person is guided by habits, limiting the possibility of behaving differently. According to, Huang et al., (2013) psychological inertia occurs when organizations frequently exhibit anxiety, stress and psychological defensiveness when resisting change, regardless of their necessity, whereas change implies many things to individuals, some may think that it is about time and look forward to change, others along a range are less enthusiastic or severely threatened by change, from workers perspective, changes implicitly mean numerous facts, such as loss of long-term relationships, the need of learning new skills or change in the job nature and its requirements, which usually necessitate more effort, a person's resistance to change is more often related to the fear of losing valued things during the change process than it is against the change itself (Godkin & Allcorn, 2008; Moradi et al., 2021). Rajaei & Asadzadeh, (2021) defined psychological inertia as the inner desire of individuals to refuse changes, as employees prefers the status quo over learning

how to use new technologies and work systems (Hur et al., 2019). since psychological inertia arises as a result of employee resistance to change, it is frequently referred to as organizational resistance to change (Akpolat, 2023).

2.1.4. Antecedents of Organizational Inertia

Understanding how inertial forces emerge is essential for organizational practices that must be overcome in order to achieve strategic value, as will be explained below;

2.1.4.1. Organizational Features

Sarabi et al., (2020) argued that organizational inertia is caused by several factors including age, size and internal structures that determine relative power and decision autonomy within the organization and complexity of the task environment. Singh and Lumsden, (1990); Pearse, (2010); Aryasa et al., (2017) agreed that inertia increases with the size and age of the organization, Hannan and Freeman, (1984); Shimizu and Hitt, (2005) contend that when a company grows in size and age, the number of rules and routines increases and those rules and routines become more institutionalized and complex and as a result organizations become more inert and less responsive to change. Larger and older organizations are notorious for being resistant to change and displaying high levels of inertia (Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Godkin & Allcorn, 2011). Wang et al., (2021) suggest that larger firms find it difficult to unlearn old ways of doing things, because their organizational structure is frequently bureaucratic, reinforces existing methods and standard operations, making it difficult to modify procedures and thus are less able to apply new methods for innovation. Moreover, the older organization is, the higher the probability that it is constrained by inertia and past performance (Huang et al., 2013). As a result, large and old corporations are more complex (Le Mens et al., 2015).

2.1.4.2. Organizational Resources

Organizational inertia arises due to the failure to change resource investments patterns (Hur et al., 2019; Airikkala, 2021; Teofilus et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2023),

Zuzul and Tripsas, (2020) argued that in the presence of radical environmental changes, managers tend to perpetuate existing resource allocation patterns rather than invest in new resources which may inhibit their adaptation to technological discontinuities (AlKayid et al., 2022) and hinders companies' ability to learn and acquire knowledge about new technology, products and expertise (Aryasa et al., 2017).

2.1.4.3. Routine

Akpolat, (2023) indicated to routine which results from the continuation of the work done in the same ways for a long time. Shi and Zhang, (2018) stated that when routines become embedded within an organization over time, they may elicit automatic responses based on previous expertise and create an intense inner resistance to changes (Zhou and Wu, 2010; Zhen et al., 2021) which reduce firms' ability to innovate using new methods.

2.1.4.4. Organizational Behavior

Jui-Chan et al., (2020) stated that when an organization attempts to change due to past successful experience and operational procedures, it will exhibit inertial behaviors in organizational structure, strategy and policy. According to, Yi et al., (2016) resistance to change classified as individual, group and organizational-level, at the organizational level including power and conflict, organizational culture and structure, while regarding group level such group norms, group cohesiveness, groupthink and commitment escalation, individual factors that include habits, job insecurity, uncertainty, perceived threats and fears such as fear of the unknown, financial loss, or reduced job status. Plein, (2019) stated that individual beliefs and behaviors may be barriers to developing and implementing adaptation strategies. Sillic, (2019) asserted that individual inertia would be influenced by group inertia, which will manifest as an increase in the difficulty in turning from one cognitive rule to another and through behavioral intentions to switch to the new incumbent system. This behavior, whether individual or group-based, is revert to perceived

threat of losing power or even their position, which triggers negative psychological reactions and causes them to be biased towards the current status (Mikalef et al., 2021). Thus, organizational behavior becomes predictable, rigid and inflexible (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991).

2.1.4.5. Environmental Changes

Organizational inertia theory does not claim that organizations never change, but rather that inertia is determined by changes in a given environment, for example, when the speed of reorganization is much slower than the rate at which environmental conditions change, there is a high level of organizational inertia (Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Larsen and Lomi, 2002; Hur et al., 2019). Sillic, (2019) stated that some common characteristics of organizational inertia include the inability to adapt to new environmental conditions and exchange information with the surrounding environment and to adequately respond to internal and external demands. Haag, (2014) contend that the stronger inertia's force that preserve the status quo, the more slowly an organization in confronting environmental opportunities or threats, which increasing organization's response time to it's external environment.

2.2. Employee Innovative Behavior

Scott and Bruce, (1994) were the first to conceptualize the concept of employees' innovative behavior, and the literature has evolved rapidly since then (Abbas and Wu, 2021). Chen et al., (2016); Anwar and Niode, (2017) defined employee innovative behavior as "Production and implementation of novel and useful ideas that contribute to the enhancement of products, services, processes and management."

Qi et al., (2019) stated that employee innovative behavior focused on the innovation process, rather than the innovation outcome (i.e., new products), in which engaging in the innovation process is a prerequisite for the production of innovative outcomes (Shin et al., 2017). In accordance with (Yuan and Zhou, 2015;

Yang et al., 2021) employees may be required to challenge authority and propose new working procedures as part of the innovation process. Employees' innovative behavior is categorized as positive deviant behaviors because it allows individuals to deviate from existing norms and challenge the status quo in order to achieve desirable outcomes that benefit the organization (Abbas & Wu, 2021). Purwanto et al., (2021) determined it as "Behaviors that are geared towards implementing change, applying new knowledge, developing new ideas and improving work processes". Jung et al., (2021) contend that employees' innovative behavior is a complex process of changing the status quo, idea conflict and role complexities in order to generate and implement new ideas. Hakimian et al., (2016); Dedahanov et al., (2017); Asurakkody & Shin, (2018); Ghasempour Ganji et al., (2021); Ayoub et al., (2023) suggest several factors have been examined as the determinants of employee innovative behavior including organizational climate and culture, job characteristics, relationships with superiors, knowledge management, leadership style, individual differences such employee risk taking behavior and individual's flexibility, social/group contexts, employee engagement and affective commitment (Jafri, 2010). EIB includes three key component activities: idea generation, promotion and implementation (Janssen, 2000), as following,

2.2.1. Idea Generation

According to, Karani et al., (2021); Nguyen et al., (2023) idea generation is the first stage of the various stages that innovative behavior goes through, which is associated with the emergence of new nonstandard ideas (Gogoleva et al., 2016), in which employees engaging in activities that seek opportunities, identify performance gaps and produce useful solutions, through a process of combining existing ideas with new concepts to find solutions to problems that arise in the organization through exploration, exploitation and risk taking (de Jong and Den Hartog, 2007; Taştan, 2013; Bammens, 2015; Purwanto et al., 2021). Young, (2012); Smith & Mannucci, (2017); Grobбен, (2022) indicated that idea generation is highly

similar to creativity and requires behaviors such as cognitive flexibility, openness to opportunities in the environment, acquisition of a greater amount of information and examination of the problem with multiple methods, while, (Haiba et al., 2017) stated that idea generation relies on individual characteristics (an individual's creativity, self-confidence, job knowledge and job demands) than group and organizational characteristics.

2.2.2. Idea Promotion

In accordance with, Grobbsen, (2022) The second stage of employee innovative behavior is idea promotion, which involves finding and gathering partners, sponsors or supporters of ideas that have been generated (Helmy et al., 2019). Alarifi and Adam, (2023) determined idea promotion as "Behavioral activities aimed at gaining support and endorsement for ideas proposed by management and coworkers, as well as obtaining approval from top management to allow the idea to be realized and to make the occurrence of new changes possible in organizations". Gogoleva et al., (2016); Asurakkody & Shin, (2018) stated that idea promotion characterized by a decrease in the importance of personal qualities, while organizational and management level determinants such as organizational climate and practices of external motivation and incentives and encouragement for innovative behavior become more important. While, idea promotion stage gives strength those generated ideas and strives to remove organizational resistance and barriers to change, as this stage necessitates greater organizational support and collaboration, whereas finding support includes negotiating, persuading and influencing key organizational members who contribute by providing the necessary power to take a new idea or solution to the next level, such as turning that idea into practice and mobilizing the necessary resources (Ataoğlu, 2019; Akram et al., 2020).

2.2.3. Idea Implementation

Karatepe et al., (2020) indicated that innovation and idea implementation are inherently interdependent. Booher, (2020) underlined that since innovation is built

on creative ideas, it is not complete until it is successfully implemented. Sazkaya and Dede, (2018) indicated that once an idea is approved, additional resources such as time, money and people are allocated, as well as integration with existing systems and revision of ideas (West, 2002; Lukes & Stephan, 2017) as well as preparing appropriate plans and procedures for putting the ideas into action, this entails anticipating problems and developing proactive contingency plans, followed by transforming the idea into a procedure that can be used within the organization (Hansen and Thingvad, 2019), by producing a new prototype of innovation that can be experienced, eventually applied, disseminated, used and institutionalized (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Janssen, 2000). Idea implementation is a social activity that is carried out with the support of colleagues, supervisors, organizational resources and approval which cannot be limited to the initiator's individual efforts because other people must agree with the new situation (Kmieciak, 2021). As a result, the success of the third stage of the innovative process is entirely determined by factors of organizational and management level, rather than individual and personal characteristics of the innovative process initiator (Gogoleva et al., 2016).

3. Literature Review

3.1. Organizational Inertia and Employee Innovative Behavior

Javed et al., (2019) showed that employee innovative behavior to be complex, nonroutine behavior in which employees proposed new ideas, avoided conventional thinking and disagreed with superiors by challenging the status quo, in addition, innovative behavior differs from routine behavior as it don't relate to standardized tasks (Günzel-Jensen et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2021). Innovative behavior, as a type of extra-role behavior, has the characteristics of high risk and high uncertainty, which cause employees frequently to evade or resist it (Zhao & Ye, 2023). On the other hand, organizational inertia theory postulates a mature organization's propensity for remaining the same path (AlKayid, 2023). Zhen et al., (2021) argued that rigid and fixed routines limit the efficiency of IT-related resources

and practices, reducing organizational agility, while organizational inertia causes the organization's operating mode and forward direction to become more solidified, resulting in a loss of flexibility. Whereas, initial studies on organizational inertia concentrated on the negative effects of structural inertia on organizational change or innovation (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). Nijssen et al., (2006) believed that the greater the organizational inertia is, the greater the lack of innovation the enterprise has and the less likely to develop innovative services and products. While, Huang et al., (2013) concluded that organizations are hesitant to take on riskier innovative activities, due to inertia that inhibits them from innovating and changing. Purc & Laguna, (2019) showed that employees' openness to change values is positively related to their innovative behavior. Feng et al., (2022) contend that the greater an enterprise's organizational inertia, the more it can influence employees' cognitive processes. Hasannejad, (2022) revealed the correlation between organizational laziness and performance is mediated by organizational inertia, while stated that managers should plan to reduce laziness and organizational inertia in order to improve organizational performance of their employees. Senbeto et al., (2022) found that employee resistance to change had a negative correlation with an innovative environment, on the other hand, employee resistance to change positively mediates the relationship between traditional culture and employee innovation, while negatively mediating the relationship between innovative cultures and employee innovation. So, the first hypothesis can be proposed as the following:

H1: Organizational inertia has a negative impact on employee innovative behavior.

3.1.1 Organizational Inertia and Idea Generation

Idea generation is the stage at which individuals use their creativity to create something new and advantageous for the advancement of an organization (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Helmy et al., 2019). Minatogawa et al., (2018); Özgengel, (2021) stated that creativity and inertia can be viewed as adversaries, as inertia is conceptually opposed to discretionary work behavior because the former manifests

as passive while the latter is active and self-initiated. Cowen, (1952) discovered a link between psychological threat and rigid thinking. Howell and Boies, (2004) concluded that a flexible role orientation is positively related to engaging in idea generation activities. Furthermore, Hakimian et al., (2013) revealed that the interaction of job insecurity, such as fear of losing a job, could have a negative impact on subordinates' ability to be significantly productive and creative. Nguyen et al., (2019) indicated that organizational adaptability is positively associated with employee innovation, since firms that are good at creating change and learning are better at generating new ideas, and adaptability is linked to employee innovation by the source of ideas, proactive response and risk-taking. Arasli et al., (2020) revealed that psychological safety is positively related to employee engagement in creative work tasks. Booher, (2020) found that the relationship between creative personality and idea generation is stronger at higher levels of psychological safety, employees who perceive their workplace as non-threatening and supportive are more likely to propose new ideas. Thus, this research hypothesize first sub-hypothesis as follows:

H1.a: Organizational inertia has a negative impact on idea generation.

3.1.2 Organizational Inertia and Idea Promotion

Montani et al., (2020) indicated that once creative ideas have been created, additional efforts in the idea promotion phase are required to overcome organizational members' potential resistance to new ideas and to obtain the support of key decision-makers who can assist in moving generated ideas forward. Khan et al., (2022) stated that idea promotion requires sociopolitical skills, networking abilities, social influence and legitimacy, when employees among their colleagues and across the organizational hierarchy have support and connectivity, employees with innovative ideas can easily approach others to obtain the necessary support to implement their ideas. Zhang et al., (2022) concluded that organizational support influences employee innovative behavior positively, as employee innovative behavior is more likely to occur when an organization gives them the necessary support, making it easier for them to overcome any challenges they may face

(Chathoth et al., 2014). Li et al., (2016) according to social influence theory that states socially influential people strongly influence employee attitudes, which users' behavior tendency is influenced by how much they think others approve of them, with more resistance pressure from socially significant others, employees be more likely to resist the knowledge management system. Haskamp et al., (2021) view that inertia can affect the acceptance and legitimacy of a new product or service, that inertial forces may weaken their legitimacy. Mutonyi et al., (2022) stated that an organizational culture that supports new ideas or innovative approaches to completing tasks has the potential to encourage employee individual innovation, is positively related to individual innovative behavior. Therefore, the following can be the second sub-hypothesis:

H1.b: Organizational inertia has a negative impact on idea promotion.

3.1.3. Organizational Inertia and Idea Implementation

Norouzinik et al., (2022) refer to ideas implementation as more practical efforts in converting new ideas into practical solutions and implementing them in organizational work activities, resulting in actual tangible changes to products, services, processes, or other aspects of organizational functioning. Lukes and Stephan, (2017); Sazkaya and Dede, (2018) agreed that a key challenge in the implementation phase is overcoming obstacles, barriers and resistance. Wang et al., (2015) Stated that inertia hinders implementation of new processes, techniques and procedures. Dewett, (2011) claimed that implementing ideas is risky because it represents disruptions in routines, a deviation from the established order, since, implementation of an idea means that organizational practices may change and new way of doing things becomes stable and repetitive practice, as a norm (Gogoleva et al., 2016). Implementing new products, processes or procedures in workplaces is difficult and time-consuming due to resistance to change as well as structural and cultural barriers (West, 2002). Godkin and Allcorn, (2008) stated that obstacles to strategic implementation that have a high impact on organizational change are

insight, action and psychological inertia. In similar with, Cöster and Petri, (2014) Insight inertia that negatively influences an organization's ability to develop and implement a new strategic direction. Consequently, the third sub-hypothesis can be proposed as the following:

H1.c: Organizational inertia has a negative impact on idea implementation.

Thus, the conceptual model is shown in **Figure 1**.

4. Method

4.1. Data Collection and Sampling Frame

This research employed a quantitative approach through collecting data from a sample of teachers working at public secondary schools in Egypt, Mansoura city. The schools were chosen on the basis of a probability Sampling Technique (Stratified Random Sampling), as obtaining the required sample through selected the respondents randomly as well as suitability for the research objectives. In this vein, there were 353 questionnaires distributed to teachers from public secondary schools, only 321 questionnaires were statistically valid and free of missing data with a response rate of 90.93%.

The characteristics of the present study sample illustrated that teachers were mainly from oldest are 50 years and over age group (56.7%) (**See Table 1**), followed by 40 to less than 50 years of age (23.7%). A notable percentage of females are recorded (around 51.7%).

Table (1); Characteristic of the Sample

Characteristics	N	%
Gender		
Male	155	48.3
Female	166	51.7
Age		
less than 30 years	20	6.2
From 30 to less than 40	43	13.4
From 40 to less than 50	76	23.7
50 years and more	182	56.7

N= 321.

4.2. Measurement Scale

Preexisting scales with established validity and reliability were used to measure the study variables. We followed the translation/back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1980; Behling and Law, 2000) to translate the scales from English to Arabic. To verify that the translated scale items reflected the constructs we intended to measure, a panel of eight experts in human resources management and organizational behavior was used to assess the content validity of the scales. We further modified the wording of the scale items upon the feedback from the panel. To assess and confirm the face validity of the scales, we invited 3 school headmasters as well as 4 teachers (i.e., from the target population) in the public secondary schools to review all the scale items. Unless otherwise indicated, all items were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). **Organizational Inertia (OI)** was measured adapted from the scale developed by (Huang et al., 2013), that were contained 13 items insight inertia (4); action inertia (5); psychological inertia (4). One sample item was "Relying on previous knowledge and experience is sufficient to achieve efficiency at work". The Cronbach's alpha was 0.873 (see Table 2). **Employee Innovative Behavior (EIB)**. was assessed using nine items were adopted and modified from (Janssen, 2000). Each dimension (i.e., idea generation, idea promotion and idea implementation) was measured with three items. One sample item was "Searching out new working methods, ways or instruments." The Cronbach's alpha was 0.899 (see Table 2). While, the study used multiple regression analysis approach for data analytical techniques.

As shown in Table (2) the values of the reliability and validity coefficients are acceptable for all scale items, since, Cronbach's alpha values were greater than 0.7, and discriminant validity rule is satisfied because it found that each discriminant validity was higher than it's correlation with other dimensions (Fornell and Larcker,

1981; Hair et al., 2014). Thus, the scales' items statistically will be analyzed using SPSS V.25 software program and none will be eliminated.

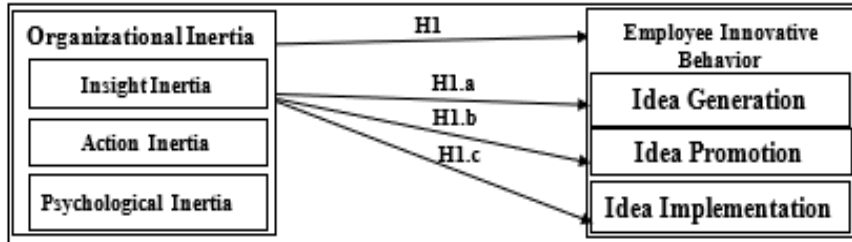


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Table 2. Scale Reliability and Validity.

Variables	Dimensions	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha	Discriminant Validity
Organizational Inertia	Insight Inertia	4	0.784	0.885
	Action Inertia	5	0.818	0.904
	Psychological Inertia	4	0.844	0.918
OI		13	0.873	0.934
Employee Innovative Behavior	Idea Generation	3	0.840	0.916
	Idea Promotion	3	0.741	0.860
	Idea Implementation	3	0.809	0.900
EIB		9	0.899	0.948

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Organizational Inertia	Employee Innovative Behavior
Organizational Inertia	4.03	0.761	1	-0.614
Employee Innovative Behavior	2.56	0.691	-0.614	1

Table 4. Regression Analysis Results

H	Dependent Variable	Independ ent Variables	Unstandar dized Beta	Standard ized Beta	T	Sig	R ²	F (Sig)
H1.a	Idea Generation	Insight Inertia	-0.709	-0.531	-2.361	0.00**	0.582	29.317** (0.00)
		Action Inertia	-1.443	-1.208	-1.744	0.024*		
		Psycholo gical Inertia	-1.338	-0.782	-2.816	0.00**		
H1.b	Idea Promotion	Insight Inertia	-0.741	-0.608	-2.147	0.036*	0.471	16.218* (0.022)
		Action Inertia	-1.346	-1.243	-1.774	0.021*		
		Psycholo gical Inertia	-1.293	-0.822	-2.620	0.029*		
H1.c	Idea Implement ation	Insight Inertia	-0.727	-0.907	-2.252	0.00**	0.528	21.726** (0.00)
		Action Inertia	-1.514	-1.414	-1.937	0.032*		
		Psycholo gical Inertia	-1.355	-1.213	-2.408	0.00**		

Source: prepared by researchers based on statistical analysis. * = Significant at 0.05,

** =Significant at 0.01

5. Results

IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.0 was used to analyze the data. Table 3 displays the mean, standard deviation, and the correlation coefficients among study variables. The results reflected in Table 3 indicate that there is a general perception among teachers regarding the study variables (organizational inertia and employee innovative behavior), as teachers' perceptions regarding organizational inertia tended to be positive with a mean representing (4.03), reflects that teachers' acknowledge for the existence and availability of organizational inertia in the schools where they work, whereas regards to innovative behavior teachers' perceptions tended to be negative with a mean representing (2.56), indicate a low level of innovative behavior for teachers employed in the public secondary schools. Additionally, the results reflected indicated that organizational inertia is significantly and negatively related to employee innovative behavior.

The results in the Table (4) reveal that all the direct paths with different p-values for organizational inertia dimensions in the regression model were significant, as (p-values < 0.05). H1.a is supported, since organizational inertia dimensions (insight inertia, action inertia and psychological inertia) together have a significant negative influence on idea generation, with $F = 29.317$. As well as, H1.b also accepted, since organizational inertia dimensions (insight inertia, action inertia and psychological inertia) collectively have a significant negative impact on idea promotion, with $F = 16.218$. Additionally, H1.c also supported, while organizational inertia dimensions (insight inertia, action inertia and psychological inertia) together have a significant negative influence on idea implementation, with $F = 21.726$. Thus, H1 was totally supported which revealed that organizational inertia has significant negative impact on employee innovative behavior.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The impact of organizational inertia on employee innovative behavior in public secondary schools was investigated in this study. Organizational inertia has a significant negative impact on employee innovative behavior, according to the findings. This negative influence supports results of (Huang et al., 2013; Haskamp et al., 2021; Moradi et al., 2021) that concluded organizational inertia has a significant negative effect on organizational innovative activities (open innovation and business model innovation). This finding consistent with the studies of (Nedzinskas et al., 2013; Amiripour et al., 2017), which confirmed that organizational inertia has a negative relationship with organizational performance. This result partially consistent with some studies (Zhang et al., 2022; TÜRK, 2023), which concluded that innovation performance is significantly negatively affected by organizational inertia. The results indicated that there is a significant negative impact of organizational inertia on idea generation. This ultimate result supports the research of (AlKayid et al., 2023) which confirmed that organizational inertia is negatively related to employee creativity. Additionally, the findings revealed that there is significant negative impact of organizational inertia on idea promotion, which mean that if a teacher has generated an idea for some improvement, the teacher must overcome the inertness of organizational practices and convince leaders of the importance and advantages of changes, it's a risk for a teacher to take responsibility for a suggestion. The innovator then seeks support for this, and he may perceive uncertainty about how to sell his ideas. Hence, people in organizations challenge new ideas and show resistance due to their current beliefs and habits. Since, when new ideas are proposed, people consider how they might affect them or their functioning in daily business life, as they try to understand whether this innovation changes their existing mindset, knowledge, skills, and habits, and then they have a general tendency to perceive this new information carefully whether it is consistent with their existing thoughts, resulting in a preference for shared known practices that represent a

source of resistance (Gogoleva et al., 2016; Asurakkody and Shin, 2018; Ataoğlu, 2019; Khan et al., 2020). It would be challenging for teachers to abandon their traditional methods and practices, because they feel content when they are familiar with how to perform tasks well, consequently, they often resistant to seek or implement novel approaches, this may be related to their unwillingness to change routine, desire to stick to habits, satisfaction level with the current status, wanting to preserve their power and position and need to avoid risk, all of this would cause individuals in the organization publicly rejecting any suggestion for change. Furthermore, the findings showed that there is significant negative impact of organizational inertia on idea implementation, this result agrees partially with some studies (Shimizu and Hitt, 2005; Godkin and Allcorn, 2008; Cöster and Petri, 2014), which showed that organizational inertia has significant negative impact on organizational change and to develop and implement new strategic direction. Hence, inertia seems to be closely related to loafing behavior from teachers and leaders by expressing intentional resistance to what is new or taking part in change process. Finally, as this result would explain through equity implementation theory that provide an additional explanation for reasons behind teacher resistance, asserts that teachers probable to oppose the implementation of a change if they feel that it will cause inequity or an undesirable result, According to this theory, resistance behaviors are an individual's passive responses to perceived threats or stress against implementing new information system (Li et al., 2016), since organizational inertia prevent effective implementation processes, it seems that high perception of uncertainty by employees will cause them to interpret future situations as threatening and will avoid or act passively by displaying discomfort and anxiety over the events that will follow the threatening situation, as it's possible to argue that in situations where there is uncertainty and the future isn't clear and unpredictable, would reduce the ability to act toward implementing change and innovative methods.

7. Implications

7.1. Theoretical Implications

This study provides a number of theoretical and academic contributions by combining new research streams that haven't been checked previously and addressing some of research gaps, which contribute to filling the gap related to previous studies by examining these relationships between organizational inertia and employee innovative behavior that were uncovered and ignored by the researchers. Firstly, this study is, to the researchers' best knowledge, the first to investigate how organizational inertia influence employee innovative behavior. Secondly, this study shedding light on possible risks for organizational inertia and how it inhibits innovative behavior, since the results reveal that the three organizational inertia dimensions which are insight inertia, action inertia and psychological inertia negatively affect employees' innovative behavior, which in turn will decrease organization insight, learning and overall performance. Moreover, as the findings regarding the links between organizational inertia and employee innovative behavior contribute to expanding body of empirical research on the negative side of organizational inertia of educational staff. Finally, this study outcomes opened a window for other researchers to conduct researches on both organizational inertia and employee innovative behavior, and that will help to fine-tuning of these subjects' literature.

7.2. Practical Implications

This study offers important guidelines and practical implications for public secondary schools top management, as suggested that public secondary school can enhance teacher's innovative behavior via reducing the organizational inertia and establishing suitable strategy for employee resistance to change.

- Establishing ecosystems that connect the school to the surrounding environment, through this ecosystem, entities collaborate, exchange knowledge, and conduct environmental scanning to achieve educational changes.

- To overcome resistance to change, communicate with teachers, explain the reason for the change and enumerate its reasons, and involve them in the decision-making process, and providing it on a regular basis to remove their fears about change.
- Encourage creativity by making it a requirement of the job, by welcoming open-minded new ideas and allow for mistakes, and providing a variety of training and development opportunities, including those in interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, methodical skills, and strategic thinking, and learning how to adapt to change, which help them identify and fulfil current and future change needs efficiently and assist in broadening their idea sources, to generate more novel ideas.
- Pay attention to teachers' individual and professional needs, give them autonomy, growth opportunities and authority in challenging the status quo and trying new ideas, and instill a sense of trust and hope in them, thereby creating psychological capital to increase innovation and so turn suggestions for change into actual behaviors.
- Provide both intangible resources as (psychological support) and tangible resources such (training, idea championing, and access to resources) required for successful idea implementation.
- Change resource investments patterns through establish an appropriate system of innovation resource allocation and an innovative evaluation system and focus on ideas that are "valuable and implementable".
- Implement and monitor change strategies and plans by developing shorter-term operational plans that give to top management directives to initiate group innovative behavior, through the development of a reward system, providing positive and effective communication and feedback channels for teachers, this can be achieved through piloting changes, and the number of achieved KPIs, assisting in the resolution of difficulties encountered by teachers in innovation and rewarding and commending teachers' innovation behavior. In case of negative results, management needs to revisit existing policies and revise the change strategy.

8. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

In terms of further limitations and future research directions, this paper was conducted within the context of public secondary schools in Egypt as a developing country. As a result, a multi-group analysis (a comparative study between a developed and developing country) may help in exploring different views of public secondary schools teachers regarding their perceptions towards this organizational style and its associated outcomes in the work environment. In addition, this paper employed a quantitative approach using a questionnaire to gather the data from participants. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct a mixed method approach to provide solid findings and represent clear insights and understanding concerning the relationships between the investigated variables. In addition, the study suggests that future research should rely on a larger sample size from various sectors such as drawing a comparison between secondary schools in public and private sectors. Moreover, Future work is suggested to include the relationship between organizational inertia and other variables as (job standardization, turnover intention and entrepreneurial behavior, etc.).

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