

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:	Earnest LI	Student ID number:	1715380
Programme:	DBA		
Module:	Quantitative Research Methods		
Module code:	SBPD7010	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:	Dr Andrew Chan	Internal Verifier:	
Assignment Title:	Project report, reflection and in-class test	Word count (or equivalent):	Project report: 3500 Reflection: 1000
Submission deadline:	19 April 2019	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	17 May 2019
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 50%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

**Module Learning Outcomes
(from module syllabus)**

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- critically assess the appropriate contexts for using quantitative research techniques, the philosophical underpinnings, strengths and limitations of quantitative research;
- design a quantitative research project, with particular attention to hypotheses, data sources, sampling and questionnaire design;
- select from and implement a range of quantitative analysis techniques in order to address a particular research question;
- understand and critically evaluate quantitative research papers in the candidate's subject area of interest.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Component 1: Project Report (40%)

Develop a survey instrument and research strategy (including sampling and analysis) to test hypotheses in your area of interest. Pretest your instrument and check for robustness. Present your instrument and the outcomes of your pretest as a report (3500 words). This needs to be supported by Component 2.

You need to develop a research strategy for a topic of your choice. This needs to address the following issues:

- A brief introduction to the academic context of your topic
- Literature review
 - Conceptualisation
 - Hypotheses development
- Methodology
 - Measurement/scale development
 - Sampling
- Findings
- Conclusions

The report needs to include topic related references and refer to appropriate research development literature. Be critical and justify your choices.

Component 2: Reflection (10%)

You will write a 1000-word reflection on this process, describing your learning experiences and the challenges you encountered.

This document supports your main report in Component 1 and should reflect on your journey. This should include comments on the feedback received from your pretest. You do not need much, if any, subject related references for this document but you may want to refer to business research literature or perhaps look at the pedagogical literature to explore how you learn.

Component 3: In-class Test (50%)

An in-class test will take the form of unseen questions to be answered within 2 hours. It will test students' understanding of the basic principles of statistics and quantitative research. Students are not expected to memorise formulae, any formulae needed will be provided.

FORMATTING AND LAYOUT

Please note the following when completing your written assignment:

1. **Writing:** Written in English in an appropriate academic style
2. **Focus:** Focus only on the tasks set in the assignment.
3. **Length:** 4,500 words
4. **Formatting:** Typed on A4 paper in Times New Roman or Arial font 12 with a 2 centimetre space at each edge, 1.5 spaced and pages numbered.
5. **Document format:** In report format
6. Ensure the assignment specification (Page 1) is attached to your assignment and a bibliography using **Harvard referencing** throughout is also provided.
7. **Research:** Research should use reliable and relevant sources of information e.g. academic books and journals that have been peer reviewed. The research should be extensive.

The use of a range of information sources is expected – academic books, peer reviewed journal articles, professional articles, press releases and newspaper articles, reliable statistics, company annual reports and other company information. All reports must be consistently referenced with a separate Harvard style bibliography. They will be submitted via Turnitin and checked for plagiarism.

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the extent to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Component 1: Project Report (40%)

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks Awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
Use of current research Range of sources used Referencing Academic conventions	8	
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
Systematic and conceptual knowledge Critical awareness of relevant issues New insights Comprehensive understanding of techniques	8	
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
Develop critiques Analytical ability Evaluation of research	8	
4. Practical Application Skills		
Application of knowledge, tools and techniques Practical use of research techniques	8	
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		
Professional presentation Effective communication at professional level Fluency of expression	8	

Pilot study of the relationship between humor climate and the innovative work behavior in a Hong Kong's new media company

Introduction

In February 2019, news outlet HK01 announced that 70 employees (about 9% of its staff) will be laid off. The company says the objective of this action is to restructure the organization to improve efficiency under a competitive and fast-changing environment. One month before, several new media companies such as Storyful, a social media intelligence firm owned by NewsCorp, closed its Hong Kong office and dismissed six editorial employees (Cheng, 2019). In the US, BuzzFeed said it will cut 15% of its employees to reduce cost. It shows that some new media companies are facing the challenge to adopt a competitive strategy to survive.

According to the Digital media trends survey, 13th edition (Westcott et al., 2019), consumers have started to select their own media and entertainment experience among pay TV, streaming video, and music. To satisfy the needs of consumers under the digital age, the new media companies have to be innovative. The problem is how can the leaders of the new media companies lead the team to be innovative? Media and entertainment industry may give a general impression that leaders and employees are innovative. From the observation of the author who had been working in the media industry for 25 years, most media companies in Hong Kong are adopting transactional leadership that centers the function of supervision, organization, and group performance. Some leaders are recruited to be the top management to operate new media companies, and they still apply transactional leadership rather than transformational leadership. To avoid blocking the innovative behavior, some supervisors of the new media company try to use workplace humor. They encourage members to generate ideas to improve the production process and product.

Leaders have to learn how to create an organizational climate that can encourage members to apply innovative thinking to solve problems and develop new products and services (Horth and Buchner, 2014). Ho, et al. (2011) states humor helps leaders and members look into the challenges with a new angle and strengthen their coping capabilities. Researchers believe humor represents a multifunctional management tool to reach business goals and objectives (Romero and Cruthirds, 2006) because humor is one of the common elements of human interaction. Positive humor style including affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor can have positive impacts on organization outcomes, communication, stress reduction, and creative thinking. The former is treated as a social lubricant creating a positive work climate to benefit the interaction between leaders and members. The latter is treated as a coping mechanism for reducing the level of stress.

Many previous research papers study the relationship between humor climate and employees' innovative work behavior. Tang (2008) conducted a study to examine the use of humor by leaders positively affecting the employees' innovative behavior. The subject of the study was the employees of R&D departments in Taiwan's manufacturing firms. However, few pieces of literature are focusing on the media and entertainment industry in the Hong Kong context. The purpose of this paper is to fill the research gap by studying the relationship between humor climate and innovative work behavior in Hong Kong's new media companies. Three dimensions of innovative work behavior including idea generation, championing, and implementation performed by producers will be discussed. A pre-test survey will be conducted to test the reliability of the modified version of the questionnaire of innovative work behavior in the Hong Kong context.

Literature Review

Leadership, communication, and humor

Communication or workplace interaction is a way to help employees build an identity in the workplace (Holmes et al., 2007). Leaders can change the workplace culture by communicating the leadership style to share their values with followers. Moreover, leaders can use empowering leadership to allow followers to participate in the decision-making process. Furthermore, leaders can use a tone of humor to communicate with followers feeling a friendly atmosphere. It helps to encourage teamwork and individual accountability. Holmes

(2007) states that humor is a flexible indirect strategy for constructing leadership. It may have a positive impact on problem-solving, decision making, and mediating conflicts. In contrast, Cooper (2008) states negative humor can harm or destroy workplace relationships.

Humor, creativity and innovative behavior

Leaders can use humor to improve relationships between leaders and followers to build a strong team. The creativity of team members can be increased when they are exposed to a humorous atmosphere (Tang, 2008). On one hand, through the interaction between employees, it will help to create knowledge. On the other hand, it is suggested the use of humor may not be able to have an impact on employees' innovation unless the supervisors were trained and encouraged. Humor may have a moderating effect between leadership and creativity (Arendt, 2009). It also helps to strengthen task motivation that can encourage employees to work independently, willingness to take ad-hoc jobs. Hughes (2009) also agrees in humor delivery may have positive influences on followers' creativity and innovation. Besides, it is an important key to bring positive emotions and creative performances as well as business outcomes. Pundt (2015) also agrees humor behavior may act as a key play player to foster innovative behavior, but it is suggested to pay attention to avoid the negative use of humor. Sometimes, employees may suspect leaders hiding an agenda when they pretend to display humorous behavior as a cover.

Humorous work climate

Work climate can be observed through work processes, practices, and behaviors. Under empowering leadership, leaders can create humor work climate to foster frontline employees' IB (Slåtten et al. 2011). Employees' creativity will be stimulated to identify the problem, search information, and generate the idea to solve the problem. Leaders can use humor to engage team members combining the behaviors of emotion agility, efficient delegation, and quality feedback to have a positive impact (Sharma, 2017). Open communication with the use of humor not only create a team climate to engage team members but also provide a workplace encouraging creativity and innovative behavior. Employees can generate and implement an idea without fear of negative feedback from supervisors or leaders.

Based on the past studies about innovative work behavior (IWB), some researchers suggest IWB should be seen as multidimensional, and the focus not only be put on the generation of

the idea (creativity) but also the behavior of championing or implementing creative ideas (De Jong and Den Hartog, 2008). Under this direction, the research hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H1: Self-enhancing humor climate is positively related to idea generation

H2: Self-enhancing humor climate is positively related to idea championing

H3: Self-enhancing humor climate is positively related to idea implementation

Methodology

Sample and procedures

Data is collected from a total of 20 employees who worked as producers in the same department at a selected new media company in Hong Kong. Questionnaires are distributed to all employees in a hard copy on April 4, 2019. 20 questionnaires are returned with 100 percent of response rate. To assess humor at work, Cann et al. (2014) conducted research using the Humor Climate Questionnaire (HCQ) as the instrument to study the issue of humor at work. Researchers believe it could provide potential benefits to improve organizational outcomes. Regarding this study, the aim is to examine the relationship between humor climate and IWB, the HCQ is modified and four items are selected to indicate a positive style of humor in the workplace climate. With regards to the measurement of innovative work behavior (IWB), De Jong and Den Hartog (2008) state researchers can use a ten-item scale to study IWB with four related dimensions including opportunity exploration, idea generation, championing and application. The questionnaire of this study selects and modifies the measurement to an eight-item scale for producers of a new media company in Hong Kong. This version of the questionnaire will focus on the relationship between humor climate (4 items), idea generation (3 items), championing (2 items), and implementation (3 items).

Respondents are asked to rate each item with the five-point Likert scale as the scale construction to measure the frequency of use of positive humor and IWB (1= never; 2 = almost never; 3 = sometimes; 4 = almost every time; 5 = every time). To make the respondents easier to understand the questions of humor climate and IWB, the questionnaire is translated from English to Chinese.

Findings

Among the employees who completed the questionnaires, there are 13 male producers (65%) and 7 female producers (35%). For their age, the average age of the majority is between 26 to 30 years (60%) followed by aged between 31 to 35 years (25%), 36 to 40 years (5%), 41 to 45 years (5%), and 46 to 50 years (5%), respectively. For their education, most of the respondents earned the qualification of bachelor degree (60%), followed by the qualification of diploma (25%), master degree or above (10%), and certificate (5%). For their job position, 12 respondents are producers (60%), 5 of them are senior producers (25%), and 3 of them are supervisors (15%). For the seniority in the company, most of the respondents have been worked for one year (65%), 4 of them have been worked for two years (20%), and 3 of them worked for three years or above (15%). Regarding the years of working experience, it appears a certain extent of diversity. 6 of the respondents have 2 to 4 years of working experience (30%), followed by 5 to 7 years (20%), less than 2 years (15%), 8 to 10 years (15%), 11 to 13 years (10%), and 20 years and above (10%).

Table 1. Characteristics of the sample

Characteristic	% (N=20)
Gender	
Male	65%
Female	35%
Age	
21-25 years	0%
26-30 years	60%
31-35 years	25%
35-40 years	5%
41-45 years	5%
46-50 years	5%
Education	
Certificate	5%
Diploma	25%
Degree	60%
Master Degree or above	10%
Position	
Producer	60%
Senior Producer	25%
Supervisor	15%
Seniority	
1 year	65%
2 years	20%
3 years	15%

Working Experience	
Less than 2 years	15%
2-4 years	30%
5-7 years	20%
8-10 years	15%
11-13 years	10%
14-16 years	0%
17-19 years	0%
20 years or above	10%

Reliability

According to Table 2, the internal consistency of three variables of IWB is measured with Cronbach's alpha. The alpha score of idea generation is 0.504 showing lower reliability. The alpha score of idea championing and implementation is 0.701 and 0.764, respectively. It shows the reliability of two variables of IWB is acceptable. Among the three variables of IWB, Table 2 also reveals idea championing receives the highest mean score ($M = 3.63$; $S.D. = .741$). Idea implementation receives the same highest mean score ($M = 3.63$; $S.D. = .708$). Idea generation receives the second highest mean score ($M = 2.98$; $S.D. = .489$).

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, and reliability (N=20)

Variables	Means	Standard Deviations	Cronbach's Alpha
Idea generation	2.98	0.489	0.504
ib1	1.5	0.761	
ib2	3.65	0.745	
ib3	3.8	0.894	
Championing	3.63	0.741	0.701
ib4	3.6	0.883	
ib5	3.65	0.933	
Implementation	3.63	0.708	0.764
ib6	3.55	0.945	
ib7	3.45	0.887	
ib8	3.9	0.788	
Humor climate	4.29	0.558	
hu1	4.05	0.686	
hu2	4.35	0.813	
hu3	4.45	0.605	
hu4	4.3	0.865	

Correlation analyses

Pearson correlation is used to examine the relationship between humor climate and IWB of producers in the selected new media company. Table 3 demonstrates a positive and significant association between the variables of self-enhancing humor climate and idea generation ($r = 0.34$; $p > .05$). The p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p = .143$) showing weak evidence against Hypothesis 1, and it means Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Table 3. Correlation between humor climate and idea generation

		Humor climate	Idea generation
Humor climate	Pearson Correlation	1	0.34
	Sig (2-tailed)		0.143
	N	20	20
Idea generation	Pearson Correlation	0.34	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.143	
	N	20	20

To examine the relationship between the variables of humor climate and idea championing, table 4 demonstrates the correlation is positive and significant ($r = .561$; $p > .05$). The p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p = .1$), and Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Table 4. Correlation between humor climate and idea championing

		Humor climate	Championing
Humor climate	Pearson Correlation	1	.561*
	Sig (2-tailed)		0.1
	N	20	20
Championing	Pearson Correlation	.561*	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.1	
	N	20	20

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

To examine the relationship between humor climate and idea implementation or application, Table 5 shows a positive and significant correlation ($r = .636$; $p > .01$). The p-value is greater than 0.01 ($p = .03$), and Hypothesis 3 is confirmed.

Table 5. Correlation between humor climate and idea implementation

		Humor climate	Implementation
Humor climate	Pearson Correlation	1	.636**
	Sig (2-tailed)		0.03
	N	20	20
Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.636**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	0.03	
	N	20	20

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Conclusion

This study is a pilot test to examine the relationship between humor climate and IWB. The results show self-enhancing humor climate has a positive and direct relationship on producers' innovative behavior including idea generation, championing, and implementation in a Hong Kong's new media company. Additionally, the results of this pilot test show the consistency with the previous studies (Tang, 2008). The use of self-enhancing humor to create a humor climate has a positive contribution to promoting employees' IWB with a multidimensional approach. Besides, the measures of constructs of this pilot test consider the variable of positive humor style. It is suggested to study the impact of negative humor style on employees' innovative behavior to have a broader understanding of the relationship between humor climate and IWB.

However, the limitation of this pilot test has to be considered. First, the sample size is small. Only 20 employees from one department in one new media company are selected to participate in the survey. It is suggested to increase the sample size of the pretest to collect more data for examining the reliability and correlation of the relationship between humor climate and IWB. Convenience sampling is used as a method to collect data. It is a non-probability sampling method but it is not recommended to use in the future study. Probability sampling method such as random sampling is one of the choices. If we increase the sample size to a certain extent, we may have higher reliability compared with the non-probability sampling method. Second, the questions of the survey are translated from English to Chinese. The respondents may not fully understand the meaning of the questions and provide answers. De Spiegelaere et al. (2012) states the disadvantage of studying IWB on a sample of routine

production employees, and some IWB questions may be ill-understood and obtaining answers will be biased. Third, the questionnaires are distributed by the author who is the leader of the participants. The answer of the respondents may be affected by the feeling of fear. They may worry about their job security if they say something “wrong” when working with the questionnaires. Fourth, the survey is conducted by the method of self-rating. The rating of supervisors and employees may have a bias because they do not want to harm the relationship with supervisors.

In short, the study of humor climate and IWB can be extended to other new media companies and even traditional media companies. Leaders can learn more about how to foster innovative behavior with the use of humor as a determining factor. It is suggested the leaders of the media and entertainment industry not only put the focus on the content creation but also the production process, content delivery, and community building to obtain greater competitiveness.

References

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Appendix: Measures of constructs

Likert-type scale

(Frequency of use: 1-never, 2-almost never, 3-sometimes, 4-almost every time, 5-every time)

Idea generation

(ib1) How often do my coworkers wonder how things can be improved? 1 2 3 4 5

(ib2) How often do my coworkers search out new working methods, techniques or instruments? 1 2 3 4 5

(ib3) How often do my coworkers generate original solutions for problems? 1 2 3 4 5

Idea championing

(ib4) How often do my coworkers make important organizational members enthusiastic for innovate ideas? 1 2 3 4 5

(ib5) How often do my coworkers attempt to convince people to support an innovative idea? 1 2 3 4 5

Idea Implementation

(ib6) How often do my coworkers systematically introduce innovative ideas into work practices? 1 2 3 4 5

(ib7) How often do my coworkers contribute to the implementation of new ideas? 1 2 3 4 5

(ib8) How often do my coworkers put effort in the development of new things? 1 2 3 4 5

Humor climate

(hu1) How often humor is used by leaders to encourage or support coworkers? 1 2 3 4 5

(hu2) How often humor is all enjoyed sharing at work? 1 2 3 4 5

(hu3) The humor of members often cheers me up 1 2 3 4 5

(hu4) The humor used by members makes the work more enjoyable 1 2 3 4 5