

**Innovative Work Behavior vs. Conflict With Coworkers: Examining the Influence of  
Team Climate for Innovation**

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### **Abstract**

This research investigated the moderating role of team climate for innovation on the association between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers. In the academic literature, innovation was found to be an important phenomenon for organizations. However, it can also lead to negative outcomes including, but not limited to, conflict with coworkers. Based on the four-factor model of West (1996), team climate for innovation can be measured using the team climate inventory (TCI), and was found to be a promising work climate to enhance innovative work behavior.

Using a convenience sample, 170 participants filled in an online questionnaire. Results revealed a significant positive correlation between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict. A nonsignificant interaction effect was found for team climate for innovation on the association. In order to improve future research, the focus should be put on improving the scales used in this research and distinguishing between relationship conflict and task conflict.

*Keywords:* innovative work behavior (IWB), conflict with coworkers, team climate for innovation, team climate inventory (TCI)

## **Innovative Work Behavior vs. Conflict With Coworkers: Examining the Influence of Team Climate for Innovation**

Innovation is all around in various forms; from technological to process innovation, and from product to service innovation (Bledow et al., 2009). A substantial amount of research has been dedicated to examine the role of innovation within a variety of fields. In the increasing literature focusing on innovation and creativity within organizations, it was noted that both constructs are important for an organization (Anderson et al., 2004). According to Hull and Rothenberg (2008), creativity and innovation affect a firm's social, environmental, and financial performance. Organizations need creative thinking skills to adapt to rapid changing environments and to succeed in the marketplace (Gino & Ariely, 2012). Furthermore, both constructs have become important determinants of organizational success, performance, and longer-term survival (Anderson et al., 2014).

Innovation is defined as the intentional introduction and application of ideas, processes, products, or procedures that are new to a team or organization, and are designed to be significantly useful (West & Farr, 1990). Whereas innovation can be addressed as a separate concept, it is usually mentioned together with the concept of creativity. According to Litchfield et al. (2015), 'creative ideas are the starting point for innovation' (p. 239). This idea is also supported by Somech and Drach-Zahavy (2011), who stated that creativity can be seen as a subprocess of innovation, as it encompasses the first stage of the innovation process. In addition, due to creativity being the basis for innovation processes, it helps to solve problems in imaginative and innovative ways (Mnisri & Wasieleski, 2020).

To better understand this innovation/creativity process, Perry-Smith and Mannucci (2017) dedicated their research to conceptualizing the idea journey. Overall, creativity refers to the generation phase, whereas innovation refers to the actual implementation of ideas (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). This idea drew on Scott and Bruce's work (1944), who

developed a model of individual innovative behavior. According to them, individual innovation starts with problem recognition and the subsequent idea generation of solutions (Scott & Bruce, 1944). Next, the individual seeks support for their idea and aims to find people in approval of their idea. In the final stage, the idea journey is completed by making the idea tangible and ready to be implemented. Altogether, these form the three stages of innovative behavior: idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization (Scott & Bruce, 1994).

In this research, the main focus will be on innovative behavior. More specifically, innovative work behavior, which is defined as ‘the intentional creation, introduction, and application of new ideas within a work role, group or organization, in order to benefit role performance, the group, or the organization’ (Janssen, 2000; p. 288). The reason to choose this type of innovative behavior is because multiple researches have shown that innovative work behavior plays a crucial role in obtaining the effective functioning of organizations and subsequent long-term survival (Janssen, 2000). However, engaging in innovative practices is paired with a change of the current structure of an organization and insecurity about the potential effects of innovative behavior. Altogether, this could result in conflict between coworkers (Janssen, 2003). This raises the question whether there are certain contextual factors that can weaken the association between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers. One of the contextual factors that can moderate the association is team climate for innovation. As a result, in this research, the moderating role of team climate for innovation on the association between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict will be investigated.

### **Negative Consequences of Innovative Work Behavior**

It was long thought that creativity, in combination with innovation, solely result in beneficial outcomes for an organization (Anderson et al., 2014). However, recent literature demonstrates that this is not entirely correct. In their article, Khessina et al. (2018) aim to

approach creativity and innovation as independent constructs, that can both have adverse effects on multiple facets. A few of the adverse effects of creativity and innovation presented in the paper include, but are not limited to, explicit/implicit resistance to creative ideas, resistance from creative employees, and intensified competition (Khessina et al., 2018). The explicit resistance to creative ideas entails that ‘one employee’s creative idea could undermine other employees’ prior work, expertise and contributions’ (Khessina et al., 2018, p. 109). This belief is shared in the research done by Janssen (2003), who investigated the role innovative behavior has on satisfaction with coworker relations, and the moderating role job involvement has on this association.

In more elaboration, Janssen (2003) examined how innovation might relate to unsatisfactory coworker relations via conflict with coworkers. In his paper, it is assumed that conflict occurs between two employees when one is obstructed or irritated by the other (Janssen, 2003). An individual’s innovative behavior will be obstructed when fellow employees are hesitant to the proposed change due to the corresponding uncertainty and insecurity that comes with it. Correspondingly, another potential provoker of coworker conflict is the desire to conform to habits, preferences, and original behaviors, since people have a tendency to return to what is known (Janssen, 2003). Due to prior investments, the commitment to the established structures is appealing, whereas innovative behavior aims to change the current practices (Ayers, 2021). As a result, coworkers focused on exploring innovative ways will find little support from employees focused on persisting the established framework of theories and practices (Janssen, 2003).

The idea that there is a positive relationship between innovative behavior and conflict with coworkers is supported in the research by González-Romá and Hernández (2016). They focused their research on the possibility that the amount of innovative ideas implemented in work teams has a positive association with team task conflict and negative mood. The

researchers hypothesized and found that innovative behavior increases the level of task conflict which subsequently provokes negative team mood (González-Romá & Hernández, 2016). Considering all the aforementioned, the first question under investigation in the present research is: Is there an association between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers?

### **Interactionist Model of Creative Behavior**

It is recognized in the academic literature that innovation processes might result in conflicting task demands on individuals, teams, and organizations (Bledow et al., 2009). Yet, research has also found that diverse perspectives and conflicting ideas are essential to any innovation process (Hülshager et al., 2009). Moreover, decision-making practices, critical thinking skills, and innovative behavior practices are stimulated by task-related conflict (Kozusznik et al., 2020; de Wit et al., 2012). In 2003, Janssen recognized that there are certain factors that might influence the degree of conflict with coworkers and subsequent satisfaction with coworker relations. He illustrated that innovative behavior will be more positively related to coworker conflict when an employee has a high level of job involvement. However, high job involvement has a positive effect on in-job performance, making it a desirable attitude for employees to possess (Chughtai, 2008). This gives rise to the question whether there are other contextual factors that could ameliorate or attenuate the relationship between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers.

The idea that there are certain contextual factors that can influence innovative behavior, can be explained by the interactionist theory of creative behavior proposed by Woodman and Schoenfeldt in 1990. This theory describes how the behavior of an individual is a complex interaction between the situation and the nature of the individual (Woodman & Schoenfeldt, 1990). There are certain antecedent conditions that influence each other and an individual's creative behavior. The most important antecedents are an individual's

personality, cognitive style and abilities, and the social and environmental conditions present (Woodman & Schoenfeldt, 1990).

However, within organizations, new ideas will usually be proposed and implemented by work teams, rather than by one individual (Hülshager et al., 2009). In 1993, Woodman and colleagues built further on the interactionist theory of creative behavior, and stated that individual creative behavior is a precursor of group creativity, or in our scenario, team creativity. Team creativity is not the simple summation of the creative abilities of every individual team member involved. Rather, it is the interaction of the individual team members involved, the team composition (e.g. diversity), team characteristics (e.g. cohesiveness), team processes (e.g. problem-solving strategies), and contextual influences coming from the organization (Woodman et al., 1993).

### **Team Climate for Innovation**

The interactionist model of creative behavior in combination with the research of Woodman et al. (1993) and the research of Janssen (2003), has shown us that there are certain antecedents that will influence the degree of innovative behavior in a team. In 1990, West conducted a literature analysis and found a consistent pattern of climate factors associated with team innovativeness. Together, these factors form a team climate for innovation which can be measured by the Team Climate Inventory (TCI). In general, the TCI is 'a team-level concept of how far a team's values and norms emphasize innovation' (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2011, p. 5). The four factors are vision, participative safety, task orientation, and support for innovation (West, 1990).

Vision is defined as 'an idea of a valued outcome which represents a higher order goal and a motivating force at work' (West, 1990, p. 310). Innovation is enhanced when the vision is understandable, valued and accepted by the team members, because it ensures that the innovative efforts have focus and direction (Anderson et al., 2014). Participative safety is a

conjunction of the concepts participativeness and safety. Due to interaction between team members in a participative and interpersonally non-threatening climate, innovative practices are motivated and reinforced, rather than obstructed. (Kivimaki & Elovainio, 1999). Moving on, task orientation entails commitment to high quality performance, which will result in evaluations, changes, and critical appraisals of weaknesses (Anderson & West, 1998). Finally, support for innovation refers to the expectation, approval, and practical support given to innovation attempts, and includes cooperation to develop and apply new ideas (Kivimaki & Elovainio, 1999; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2011). Altogether, the influence TCI can have on the innovative behavior of an individual, makes it a valuable contextual factor to investigate in the present research. Hence, the second question the current paper tries to answer is: To what extent does team climate for innovation have a moderating effect on the association between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers?

The overall model of this research will focus on innovative work behavior in relationship with conflict with coworkers, and the possible moderating effect of team climate for innovation, measured by the Team Climate Inventory (TCI), on this association. The proposed model stemmed from the Innovation-Job involvement-Conflict model by Janssen (2003), taking his model as a reference, yet introducing a new moderating variable. Knowing that coworker conflict can result from innovative work behavior as has been shown by Janssen (2003), the first hypothesis of the present research postulates that there is a positive relation between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers.

However, the interactionist model of creative behavior by Woodman and Schoenfeldt (1990) in combination with the four-factor model by West (1990), has shown that there are certain work climates present which enhance innovative behavior. A very influential climate is the team climate for innovation, consisting of vision, participative safety, task orientation, and support for innovation. The second hypothesis under investigation is that the more



recognized the TCI is within an organization, the less positive the association between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict will be. A shared vision will lead to less experienced conflict, because employees have similar ideas of what is valuable for their organization. Due to participative safety, employees will feel free to express innovative behavior, since fellow employees will not consider innovative advances as threatening. Rather, colleagues will better understand the innovative practices. Also, since task orientation stimulates high quality performance, employees will have a favorable, rather than an opposing, attitude towards innovative change that enhances quality performance. Finally, support for innovation puts innovative advances central, decreasing the desire to conform to original behaviors. All in all, when the team climate for innovation is salient within an organization, employees will be more receptive to innovative behavior. This will lead to less conflict with coworkers as a result of the innovative work behavior.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants were from a convenience sample consisting of employees from various Dutch organizations who were sent an invitation letter by one of the researchers. There were two inclusion criteria. Foremost, participants had to be at least 18 years old. On top of that, each participant had to be employed within a certain organization. There was no form of compensation for, or inducement to, the participants. Initially, 255 employees started the questionnaire, however only 170 responses were taken into statistical analysis. There were 85 participants deleted from the data set, due to not filling in every question, a significantly diverse duration, or failing to check the control question. The duration cut-off score was set at a minimum of three minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. The final sample consisted of 75 male participants (44.1%), 95 female participants (55.9%), and

zero 'Other' participants, with the majority of the sample being between 45 and 67 years old (42.4%).

## **Procedure**

Each invited individual received an online questionnaire which was sent via e-mail. Participation was completely voluntary, and ethical approval was provided by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences at the University of Groningen. Prior to the questionnaire, information about the study was provided by e-mail. A summarized version of the informed consent was presented to the participants at the beginning of the survey. When consent about the design and procedure of the research was given, participants could continue with the completion of the study. If a participant did not agree, they were automatically sent to the end of the survey and no data was saved.

Completion of the questionnaire took about 10 minutes. First, participants were asked about their demographic information. Afterwards, they were asked about innovative work behavior, followed by experienced conflict with coworkers. Subsequently, participants had to answer questions about four different variables. For this bachelor thesis, the variable team climate for innovation was researched<sup>1</sup>. At the end of the questionnaire, the participants had to answer whether they filled in the questions honestly. If not, the data was deleted from the data set. Thereupon, there was an option given to leave additional questions or comments about the study. To close off the survey, a short debriefing was provided which clarified the true research purpose.

## **Measurement Instruments**

### ***Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)***

Innovative work behavior was measured using the questionnaire of Janssen (2000; 2001). In the original version, managers filled out the questionnaires for their employees. Due

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<sup>1</sup> The other variables were supportive leadership (van Boven, 2023), the dark triad (Grolleman, 2023), and entitlement (Kapitein, 2023).

to practical concerns, the items were slightly adapted in order to enable the participants to fill in the items themselves. The respondents had to answer according to a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. Overall, this part of the questionnaire consisted of nine items. Three items were focused on idea generation (e.g. ‘Generating original solutions for problems’), three items on idea promotion (e.g. ‘Acquiring approval for innovative ideas’), and the final three items concerned idea realization (e.g. ‘Transforming innovative ideas into useful applications’). The reliability of this measurement instrument was  $\alpha = 0.93$  in the present research.

### ***Conflict With Colleagues***

The degree to which participants experienced conflict with coworkers was measured using the self-assessment questionnaire of Janssen (2003). The questionnaire consisted of four items, measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. The items had to be changed slightly in order to generalize them to the variety of Dutch organizations, instead of solely to a school context. For example, the following item ‘Do you and your coworkers have different ideas on school matters’, was changed into ‘Do you and your coworkers have different ideas on work matters’. The reliability of this measurement instrument was  $\alpha = 0.81$ .

### ***Team Climate for Innovation***

Team climate for innovation was measured using a shorter version (14 items) of the Team Climate Inventory (TCI) proposed by Kivimaki and Elovainio (1999). The TCI was based on the four-factor (vision, participatory safety, task orientation, and support for innovation) theory of climate for innovation (Anderson & West, 1998). In the original version of the team climate inventory, each of the four factors had a different Likert scale. But, in order to enhance coherence in the questionnaire, we chose a 5-point Likert scale ranging from

1 = *totally disagree* to 5 = *totally agree*. The reliability of the shortened TCI was  $\alpha = 0.90$  in the present research.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

Table 1 presents the means, the standard deviations, and the zero-order correlations for the variables innovative work behavior, conflict with coworkers, and team climate for innovation. Innovative behavior was positively correlated with coworker conflict ( $r = .27, p < .001$ ), and team climate for innovation ( $r = .19, p = .013$ ). Conflict with coworkers was negatively related to team climate for innovation ( $r = -.32, p < .001$ ).

### **Test of Hypotheses**

As can be seen in Table 1, the zero-order correlation between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers shows that the first hypothesis – stating that there is a positive relation between innovative behavior and conflict – is supported ( $r = .27, p < .001$ ). The second hypothesis under investigation stated that team climate for innovation will moderate the association between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict. By using a moderation analysis, the interaction effect was tested with innovative work behavior as the predictor variable, coworker conflict as the response variable, and team climate for innovation as the moderating variable.

However, before the actual moderation analysis was conducted, the assumptions were checked. There were no violations found of the linearity assumption, homoscedasticity assumption, and normality distribution assumption. In order to account for the linearity assumption, the scatterplot between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict was analyzed, which showed a random pattern. Furthermore, the scatterplot of the residuals showed a distribution with constant variance, which implies that the homoscedasticity

assumption is met. For the final assumption, both the histogram and the Q-Q-plot showed a normal distribution, which means that the normality assumption is not violated.

In order to run the analysis, conflict with coworkers was used as the dependent variable. For the predictors, we calculated the z-scores of team climate for innovation and innovative work behavior. By taking the product of these z-scores, we calculated the interaction variable of innovative behavior and team climate. As can be seen in Table 2, there was a significant main effect between innovative work behavior and perceived conflict ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $t = 4.84$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Accordingly, it shows there was a negative relation between team climate for innovation and coworker conflict ( $\beta = -.31$ ,  $t = -5.15$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Nevertheless, there was a nonsignificant interaction effect found for team climate for innovation on the relation between innovation and conflict ( $\beta = 0.03$ ,  $t = 0.57$ ,  $p = .559$ ). As a result, it is not necessary to compute a simple slope analysis to determine which direction the interaction effect occurs, since the effect is not significant.

### **Supplementary Analyses**

In the abovementioned moderation analysis, it was shown that the moderation variable team climate for innovation did not influence the relationship between innovative behavior and coworker conflict. For the next part of the result section, we are going to investigate whether the three different stages of the innovation process might provide a different moderation effect. As already mentioned in the introduction, innovative behavior is constructed from three separate constructs: idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization. The predictor variables are the z-score of the team climate inventory, and the independent z-scores of idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization respectively. The interaction variable was calculated by taking the z-score of the team climate inventory and multiplying it with the z-score of each separated stage. Table 3 shows the moderation

analyses with the three different phases of innovative behavior. However, as can be seen in the table, none of these analyses yielded a significant interaction effect.

### **Discussion**

There seemed to be a general consensus in the academic world that innovation has a positive effect on organizational success, performance, and longer-term survival of the firm (Anderson et al., 2014). Nevertheless, as has been examined thoroughly in the review by Khessina et al. (2018), there are also downsides to innovation in an organization. A potential adverse effect of innovative behavior is conflict with coworkers (Janssen, 2003; González-Romá & Hernández, 2016). In this paper, we built further upon this idea and created a model which hypothesized that innovative work behavior interacts with team climate for innovation in providing less conflict with coworkers. First, it was hypothesized that there is a positive association between innovative behavior and coworkers conflict. Additionally, it was thought that the higher the TCI score was, the more the relationship between coworker conflict and innovative behavior is weakened.

#### **Correlation Innovative Work Behavior and Conflict With Coworkers**

The convenience sample used in this research found support for the first hypothesis, by providing a significant correlation effect. When there is a high degree of innovative work behavior present in an organization, there will also be more conflict with colleagues experienced by the employees. This finding replicates the results of the research by Janssen (2003), which was taken as a reference for our own investigation. According to Janssen (2003), this association could be because innovative advances are paired with insecurity, stress, and uncertainty which brings up resistance from fellow employees. Or, individuals have the build-in tendency to return to what is known, which is why they are wary of innovative ideas which change the current practices (Janssen, 2003). Nevertheless, it was only

a mild correlation, which gives rise to improvements for the present research and valuable implications for future research.

A potential explanation for the mild correlation is provided by the ethical dissonance theory illustrating that creativity can be related to both prosocial and antisocial tendencies (Storme et al., 2021). According to this theory, every individual aspires to uphold a moral self-image while being tempted to benefit from unethical behavior (Barkan et al., 2015). Dissonance occurs when an individual realizes they have violated their moral self-image, and is experienced as a feeling of unpleasantness. One way to resolve the uneasiness is to engage in what is known as ‘attitude bolstering’, introduced by Sherman and Gorkin (1980). Attitude bolstering entails that one will compensate for violating their moral self-image by engaging in more prosocial tendencies and increasing ethical behavior in other situations (Storme et al., 2021). Knowing that conflict can occur as a result of innovation, an employee’s moral self-image might be attacked when engaging in innovative work behavior. Hence, they will alter their behavior in order to compensate for the adverse effects of their innovative advances. An example of compensatory behavior will be when an employee strengthens their personal relation with a coworker, while engaging in, or stimulating, controversial innovative work practices. The potential chance of conflict as a result of the innovative change will be weakened, due to the improved personal relationship between the two employees. All in all, this might lead to a weaker correlation between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers. Notwithstanding, future research is required to investigate the postulated hypothesis.

### ***Task vs. Relationship Conflict***

In the present research, conflict with coworkers was addressed as one construct. However, much research has been dedicated to differentiating between the concepts of task conflict and relationship conflict (Kozusznik et al., 2020). Derived from the research by

Pelled (1996), task conflict is referred to when there are disagreements between team members about a task's nature and importance, or appropriate choice for action. Relationship conflict on the other hand, concerns the interpersonal disagreements between team members, and is characterized by anger, distrust, and other forms of negative affect (Pelled, 1996).

According to the theory of conflicting demands and ambidexterity introduced by Bledow et al. (2009), divergent opinions and conflicting perspectives are inherent to any innovation process at both individual and team level (Hülshager et al., 2009). Innovation demands lead to confrontation between individuals and teams, due to the fact that innovative demands differ from routine demands (Bledow et al., 2009). What this implies, is that a bit of conflict does not necessarily harm an organization. Rather, it is an essential phenomenon necessary to start the process of innovation. Thus, conflict might not always be interpreted as negative by employees or organizations.

Nemeth et al. (2004) found that the potential value of conflict is especially present in task conflict when compared to relationship conflict. This idea is further evident in the research by Kozusznik et al. (2020), who found that task conflict facilitates discussion on different viewpoints leading to more optimal decision-making practices. Also, innovative behavior and superior group decision making are promoted by this type of conflict, as it prevents early group consensus and stimulates critical thinking skills (de Wit et al., 2012). When considering the four items used in this research to assess coworker conflict, only one item ('Do tensions occur in the personal relationships between you and your co-workers?') assesses relationship conflict. The other three items are focused on task conflict. This potentially illustrates why there is a mild correlation between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers, since task conflict might be interpreted as less severe by employees due to the potential value it holds for organizational performance.



However, the potential positive attribution of task conflict is often not recognized because of the strong co-occurrence with, or transformation into, relationship conflict (Kozusznik et al., 2020). In the meta-analysis conducted by de Wit et al. (2012), it was shown that task conflict and group performance were more positively related in studies where the association between relationship conflict and task conflict was weak. In addition, innovative work behavior can give rise to interpersonal conflict, because an employee's personal interests and preferences play an influencing factor (Janssen, 2003). Relationship conflict can evoke negative emotions and disagreements about personal values, resulting in adverse effects for team processes and performance (Kozusznik et al., 2020). Moreover, team member anxiety is heightened due to relationship conflict, because of these disagreements about personal issues and subsequent ego threats (de Wit et al., 2012). Finally, relationship conflicts are more difficult to manage due to increased hostilities among group members as a result of the aforementioned ego threats, and team members failing to separate cognitive disagreements from personal conflicts (de Wit et al., 2012; Kozusznik et al., 2020).

All in all, what this shows, is that task conflict might be interpreted as less severe by employees due to it being beneficial for an organization, only when it is not transformed into relationship conflict (Kozusznik et al., 2020). Relationship conflict will be interpreted as more severe, as it touches upon interpersonal disagreements. More research is needed to investigate the association between innovative work behavior and task conflict or relationship conflict, and the corresponding moderating influence of team climate for innovation. For this research, it would be valuable to first increase, and then separate the scale of conflict with coworkers into task conflict and relationship conflict. Doing so, will allow future researchers to show they recognize the two different forms of conflict, and to examine the potential difference between them in relation to innovative work behavior.

### **Influence of Team Climate for Innovation**

With regard to the second hypothesis, the moderation analysis showed that there was a nonsignificant interaction effect for team climate for innovation on the association between innovative behavior and coworker conflict. This nonsignificant effect implies that team climate for innovation does not influence the association between innovation and conflict with colleagues. However, this does not imply that team climate has no effect at all.

In more elaboration, the main effect of TCI and conflict shows a correlation of -0.31 ( $p < .001$ ), see Table 2. This entails that the more salient the team climate for innovation is, the less conflict with coworkers will occur. The main effect of innovative work behavior and conflict was  $\beta = 0.28$  ( $p < .001$ ). Thus, for every one unit increase of innovative behavior, conflict with coworkers increases with 0.28 unit. Respectively, when team climate for innovation increases with one unit, the value of conflict with coworkers decreases with -0.31 units. These values almost balance out, showing an addition effect. The presence of a team climate for innovation already has an inhibiting effect on the amount of conflict, even without the presence of innovative work behavior. This shows that even though the interaction effect was found to be insignificant, team climate for innovation does have an effect on coworker conflict.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Before further discussing the limitations of the present study, it should be noted that the present research was conducted in a short period of time, which caused some practical concerns that influenced the methodology. One limitation concerns the scales used to determine innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers. The scale for innovative work behavior was derived from the study by Janssen (2000) and consisted of nine items. Initially, this scale was created with the intention to be filled in by both the participants (self-report) and their supervisors (leader-report). By including the leader-report as well, a more

thorough assessment of innovative behavior can be obtained, as it is ‘procedurally independent of the participants’ self-reports of job demands and perceived effort-reward fairness’ (Janssen, 2000, p. 292). In the present research, due to the aforementioned practical concerns, only the participants filled in the items. As a result, the degree of innovative work behavior of each participant might be inflated or decreased by their perspective of job demands and effort-reward fairness. Considering the scale used to measure coworker conflict, it only consisted out of four items. The scale was derived from the study by Janssen (2003), who introduced the items without justifying its origin or mentioning its validity. It might be valuable to add more items to strengthen the scale, in order to assess the concept of conflict with coworkers more thoroughly. Or, as aforementioned, to be able to distinguish between the concepts of task conflict and relationship conflict.

On top of that, it might be valuable to assess team-level innovative work behavior in future research, instead of individual-level innovative work behavior. According to Hülsheger et al. (2009), there is a stronger relationship between team process variables – including, but not limited to, vision, support for innovation, and task orientation – and team innovation when compared to individual innovation. The way we constructed the concept of innovative work behavior, was by focusing on an individuals’ innovative advances, and not the team’s innovative advances the individual operates in.

In conclusion, even though there are noteworthy limitations to the present study, there is a significant association found between innovative work behavior and conflict with coworkers, and there are some valuable implications for future research. Foremost, the research adds onto existing literature stating there is a positive relationship between innovation and conflict with coworkers. Furthermore, the present research indicates that it will be valuable to consider the separate constructs of task conflict and relationship conflict,

rather than taking the overarching concept of conflict with coworkers. Also, team-level innovative behavior should be considered, instead of individual-level innovation.

In addition, the present research shows that team climate for innovation remains an interesting variable to consider while investigating the relation between innovative work behavior and coworker conflict. Our data has shown that both innovative work behavior and team climate for innovation are related to coworker conflict. Innovative behavior stimulates coworker conflict, whereas team climate has an inhibiting effect on the amount of perceived conflict. This makes team climate for innovation a valuable climate to pursue within an organization. All in all, the take-home message for employers will be to remain aware of the possibility that innovation can lead to coworker conflict. Also, it will be valuable to take team climate for innovation into account to stimulate innovative processes and to weaken perceived conflict.

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## Tables

**Table 1**

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations*

	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>1. Innovative work behavior</i>	3.74	1.20	-	.27**	.19*
<i>2. Conflict with coworkers</i>	3.01	0.83	.27**	-	-.32**
<i>3. Team climate for innovation</i>	3.86	0.63	.19*	-.32**	-

\* $p < .05$     \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 2**

*Moderation Analysis of Team Climate for Innovation on the Association Between Conflict  
With Coworkers and Innovative Work Behavior*

	$\beta$	SE	t	Sig.	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	Model F	Model p
Model					.20	14.81	<.001
Constant	3.01	0.06	51.70	.000			
Innovative work behavior	0.28	0.06	4.84	.000			
Team climate for innovation	-0.31	0.06	-5.15	.000			
Interaction	0.03	0.06	0.57	.559			
IWB* TCI							

**Table 3**

*Moderation Analysis of TCI on the Association Between Idea Generation, Idea Promotion, or Idea Realization and Conflict With Coworkers*

	$\beta$	SE	t	Sig.	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	Model F	Model p
<u><i>Model Idea Generation</i></u>					.18	13.27	<.001
Constant	3.01	0.06	51.83	.000			
Idea generation	0.25	0.06	4.36	.000			
TCI	-0.28	0.06	-4.79	.000			
Interaction Generation*TCI	0.04	0.06	0.69	.490			
<u><i>Model Idea Promotion</i></u>					.19	14.19	<.001
Constant	3.00	.06	51.40	.000			
Idea promotion	0.27	.06	4.63	.000			
TCI	-0.31	.06	-5.11	.000			
Interaction Promotion* TCI	0.04	.06	0.74	.459			
<u><i>Model Idea Realization</i></u>					.16	12.04	<.001
Constant	3.01	.06	50.39	.000			
Idea realization	0.24	.06	4.02	.000			
TCI	-0.31	.06	-5.03	.000			
Interaction Realization*TCI	0.00	.06	0.05	.963			