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## Creativity Management and Manufacturing Firm's Performance

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**Aim and scope:**

This Special Issue focuses on how creativity impacts manufacturing firms' performance. The ambition with the Special Issue is to advance knowledge on the relationships between different means of organizing, managing, or way of working with creativity to manufacturing firms' performance.

*The Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management* considers that "manufacturing, like other industries, is rising to the challenges imposed by aggressive consumer demands and the need for cost-effective processing which delivers quality in the fastest possible time. Fierce competition means that keeping abreast of new developments and applications in technology is essential if companies are to meet market demands profitably and keep ahead of their competitors" (JMTM, 2019). Behind these new developments and applications (that may become innovations) there are always new useful ideas and experiential insights that have been generated, screened/assessed, implemented, and reconsidered after feedbacks (Chirumalla, 2013; 2016); thus, a creative process.

In particular, creativity in organizational contexts has been defined as: "The creation of a valuable, useful [i.e., that are both novel and appropriate/effective to some organizational goals; Amabile, 2012; Runco, 2012; Sternberg, 2006] new product, service, idea, procedure, or process by individuals working together in a complex social system" (Woodman et al., 1993; p. 293). This substantiates creativity as the antecedent of innovation (Amabile, 1983; 1996), also including the adaptation of already existing products or processes.

Creativity has been the subject of research by management scholars in its individual, group, and organizational levels according to the organism-in-its-(social and physical)environment paradigm. In particular: individual/group/organizational inner characteristics, cognitive styles, abilities, affective states, knowledge, experience, and motivation are responsible for the creative output, together with group processes and contextual factors (see Woodman et al., 1993 for a comprehensive model; Dobson et al., 2013).

Therefore, we may consider that creative behaviours interplay with creative contexts to produce 'organizational creativity'; so, the specific features of the organizational environment can work as an enhancer or constrainer (Amabile, 1996; Ekvall, 1996; Stacey, 1996; Breslin, 2019), allowing the emersion of distinct types of creativity (Unsworth, 2001).

This Special Issue wishes to draw together research contributions that investigate the peculiarities of managing creativity in manufacturing firms and associated effects on performance. As a context we assume that: i) modern manufacturing firms are experiencing new business landscapes (different from service ones; Castro et al., 2011) featured by advanced technology and business models shifts (Leoni, 2015, 2019), such as, electrification, connectivity, autonomous transport, and the circular economy (Panetto and Molina, 2008; Garetti and Taisch, 2012), and ii) literature has focussed more on the examination of creativity in service firms (Bettiol et al., 2012; Giannopoulou et al., 2014; Sigala and Kyriakidou, 2015), because considered more conducive to fostering creative processes. In this last regard, academic works investigating creativity in manufacturing firms have been few and mainly concerned with: creative working (Rodgers, 2015), product innovation (e.g., Im et al., 2012) and its impact on performance (Im and Workman, 2004; Sethi and Sethi, 2009; Chang et al., 2012), the influence of creativity-related conflict on employees' performance (Janssen and Giebels, 2013) and on business models (Palo et al., 2019), the determinants of the adoption of creativity methods and practices (Chassagnon et al., 2016; Manresa et al., 2019), and the impact of cultural and organizational structure on creativity (Mehri, 2006). From that, some important questions still need to be answered, such as:

- How creativity may help manufacturing firms to overcome different challenges (e.g., improving internal production processes, strengthening customer relationships, increasing labour productivity, increasing demand responsiveness, meeting customer demands for product customization, improving product and service quality, improving labour flexibility, enhancing supply chain collaboration, optimizing supply chain performance, allowing faster and more frequent new product releases and launches) and, as a consequence, improving their performance?
- What are the manufacturing firms' resources and capabilities that can enhance/limit creativity?
- How do digitalization technology and its use influence the creativity management in manufacturing firms?
- What are emerging patterns of creativity management in the digitalized manufacturing environment and how these patterns could support the manufacturing performance?
- Under which conditions the manufacturing environment can enhance/limit creativity?
- How to manage creativity in a systematic way for enhancing manufacturing firms performance, especially in the context of multi-actors or cross-organizational teams?
- How individual/group/organizational inner characteristics influence creativity management in organizations and how such relations affect the manufacturing firms performance?
- What are key success factors for effective creativity management in enhancing manufacturing firms performance?

To summarise, the outlined and other related questions aim to explore: i) the creative process, ii) the creative product, iii) the creative person/group, iv) the creative context, and v) the way in which all these elements mutually interact, with regard to manufacturing firms.

In this Special Issue, we propose to bring together experts in creativity (who also have experience and/or interest in manufacturing firms) with experts of management of manufacturing firms (who also have experience and/or interest in creativity). This Special Issue calls for papers for the *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management* (<https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/jmtm.htm>) and seeks theoretical and practical research avenues, frameworks, drivers, barriers, and best practices on the topic.

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