

# Employee Creativity Management Capability and Corporate Sustainability: Empirical Evidence from Furniture Exporting Businesses in Thailand

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## Abstract

Employee creativity management capability has been recognized as one of the foremost capabilities which influence on business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship among employee creativity management capability's dimension and, its consequences. Data were derived from a survey of 139 furniture exporting businesses in Thailand. The regression analysis was used to verify the hypotheses. The results highlighted that new ideas generation orientation, working practice originality implementation, and job improvement value focuses had a significant positive effect on business competitiveness. Likewise, job improvement value focus and creative solution usefulness competency had a significant positive effect on firm success. Moreover, the results also showed the relationship among business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability. Theoretical and managerial contributions, conclusion, and suggestions for future research are also presented.

**Keywords:** Employee Creativity Management Capability, Business Competitiveness, Firm Success, Corporate Sustainability, Furniture Exporting Businesses.

## 1. Introduction

The rapidly changing and extremely competitive environment has created opportunities and challenges for firms. Therefore, firm typically attempt to create and maintain the firm success and business competitiveness. The firm needs to continue generates and develop creativity, which can upgrade distinctive competencies of a firm by devising new products and service to respond to consumer demand (Vicenzi, 2000). Encouraging creativity can be essential for gaining and increasing business excellence and it can be useful to build a corporate sustainability. Many firms have tried to use various creative ideas to improve and develop firms to achieve effectiveness and efficiency, such as the ability to create new products (Huang et al.,

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2016). Creativity is invaluable and an indispensable resource and has become a core resource for achieving organizational success. It is also at the heart of increasing and generating competitive advantage that an organization can achieve an advantage over its competitors (Amabile et al., 1996). Increasing creativity is one of the crucial issue and challenges that makes organizations adapt to compete with other firms and can make a difference in the delivery of goods or services, which create the greatest consumer satisfaction (Yang et al., 2016). Many organizations have an idea to convert knowledge or creativity within an organization, which as property, is like intangible assets to benefit economically or establish a commercial advantage (Joo et al., 2014). The most organization realized that creativity is necessary for the organization, which these lead to a creative organization (March, 1991). Organizations can promote employees' creativity by the stimulation of creativity in the workplace to gain and maintain a competitive advantage (Kim et al., 2010). Although the work on employee creativity has been studied in diverse disciplines for the past decade, a substantial number of studies about employee creativity has focused on the individual level (Zuckerman & Cole, 1994). At the level of organization, creativity is a necessary factor in building an effective high performance (Weinzimmer et al., 2011). Nevertheless, there is little empirical evidence on the employee creativity at the organization level and rarely considers the perspective of management capability. The key consideration of this research explores the creativity which is particularly challenging in Furniture Exporting Business in Thailand for generating and sustaining organizational competitiveness. Therefore, this study is aimed to examine the relationship among employee creativity management capability and corporate sustainability via business competitiveness and firm success. The concept of employee creativity management capability is the combination of employee's creativity and organization's management capabilities. It plays an importance role in encouraging and supporting employees to generate cognition, utilize behavioral patterns in routine activity, improve a task performance, perform the basic functional activities, and effectively solve problems. Moreover, the resource-advantage theory is utilized to explain the relationships among employee creativity management capability and its consequences, which is a theoretical integration for describing and explaining the complete phenomenon in this study.

## 2. Literature review and hypothesis development

A conceptual framework of employee creativity management capability and corporate sustainability is illustrated in Figure 1. The study proposed the effects of five dimensions of employee creativity management capability that have an influence on business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability.

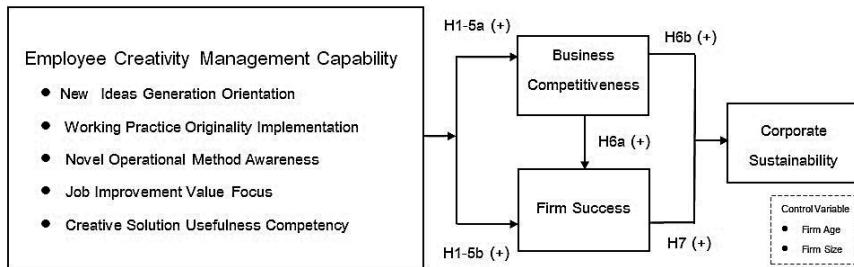


Figure 1 Model of Employee Creativity Management Capability and Corporate Sustainability

## 2.1 Employee creativity management capability

The development of knowledge, skills, and expertise of employees are importance to solve problems in the workplace. Moreover, increasing knowledge, skills, abilities, expertise and creativity of employees can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage that are hard for competitors to imitate (Rasulzada & Dackert, 2009). Employee creativity is a highly important element of organizational success for survival in a highly competitive business environment. It can either be promoted or inhibited by focusing on building organizational values, culture, and norms, and performed by focusing on generating work guidelines to employees (Shalley et al., 2004). Moreover, the role of an organization's management capabilities are a foremost engine of business growth, and these are necessary elements for congruency between competencies and the context of changing environmental conditions that can lead to increased organizational performance and success (Kor & Mesko, 2013). Therefore, an organization's management capabilities are part of the core stage that can bring the business success or failure to the organization. Employee creativity management capability is the combination of employee's creativity and organization's management capabilities. It plays a prime role in encouraging and supporting skills, attitudes, and behaviors of employees in the workplace. It helps promote an organization's management capabilities which dedicated to an inspiring and motivating employee about creative thinking skills (Pan et al., 2012).

This study has applied concepts from the prior research, Amabile (1996) who proposed four factors to manage creativity in organizations, which consists of goal setting process, evaluation, reward, and pressure. Base on the literature review, this study defined employee creativity management capability as organization's ability that encourages employees to produce ideation, utilize behavioral patterns in routine activity, improve a task or activity performance, perform the basic functional activities of the firm, and solve effectively problems, which are creating a fresh perspective that can bring the foremost benefit to an organization (Amabile, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993). Moreover, this study has developed five dimensions of employee creativity management capability which integrate from the review of related literature (Yeh-Yun Lin & Liu, 2012). These are composed of new ideas generation orientation, working practice originality implementation, novel

operational method awareness, job improvement value focus, and creative solution usefulness competency. Moreover, the resource-advantage theory is the main theory explaining employee creativity management capability. The resources of employee creativity management capability comprise both tangible and intangible resource that encourages the firm to build effective and efficient performance for businesses (Colbert, 2004). Managing these resources are particularly important for an organization to operate efficiently, an employee creativity management capability plays a crucial role in the business success which can build sustainability in future (Hunt & Arnett, 2003).

#### **New ideas generation orientation**

New ideas generation orientation is the first dimension of employee creativity management capability. New ideas can bring the greatest benefit to the firm by generating and developing, which are the prime drivers of organizational growth by the creativeness of employees (Nikolowa, 2014). The ability to generate new ideas of an organization is important survival skills in a rapidly changing business environment, which resulted in different organizations, need to adapt the existing strategies or create the new strategies (DeHaan, 2011). Therefore, new ideas generation orientation in this research is defined as the organization's ability to promote and encourage employee, by focusing on effectively creating, developing, and communicating ideas and transform from abstract ideation into something more concrete which brings the important benefit to the organization (Grimaldi & Grandi, 2005). New ideas generation are regarded as prerequisites for the effectiveness and the continued ability, which can be considered part of the important driving force of the firm success. It is a prime factor in improving organizational innovation and new ideas generation is also the main driver of creating and sustaining competitive advantage for firms (Geum & Park, 2016). Heong et al. (2012) demonstrate the role of generating ideas concept is the critical factors to achieving success, which requires thinking carefully to create ideas and it was found that the major obstacles to ideas generation are a deadlock of ideas. According to the relevant literature, new idea generation orientation is more likely to enhance organizational productivity, organizational innovation, and organizational excellence. Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** new ideas generation orientation is positively related to (a) business competitiveness and (b) firm success.

#### **Working Practice Originality Implementation**

Working practice originality implementation is the second dimension of employee creativity management capability. The work practice of employees is important to create a common understanding of activities and processes on the work that takes place within an organization (Zacarias & Martins, 2012). Working practice are the behavioral patterns of individuals in the organization, which are doing the inner work

of the organization can have an important impact on employee connections, interactions and achievement due to these working practice are a close link in organizational culture (Koveshnikov et. al, 2012). Creating work practices is critical to encourage users to achieve efficient and effective operation in an organization (Brézillon, 2003). Working practice is a notion that started from characteristics of socio-technical systems, management science, business and organizational anthropology, and designing a working system (Warren, 2003). Therefore, working practice originality implementation in this research is defined as organization's ability to understand and utilize to patterns of work activity by supporting and developing the skills, knowledge, abilities and behavior necessary to perform the work, which is an essential aspect of building a successful business (Zacarias & Martins, 2012). Considering a working practice within an organization is consistent with the arrangement of the workplace which is one of the foremost parts that support organizational success. It is also foremost to creating a deeper understanding of conducting individual activities, which is composed of a process of doing business, and evaluating the actual operational alignment and process alignment can lead to business competitiveness in future (Rosholm et al., 2013). Working practice is generated by recognizing congruence among organizational design and structure, job titles and descriptions, work system method, recruitment and selection process, organization development process, performance management system, internal communications plan, and technology, by using more efficient working practice can build business competitiveness in future (Adnan et al, 2015). Based on the relevant literature, working practice originality implementation is more likely to enhance business competitiveness and firm success. Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**Hypothesis 2:** working practice originality implementation is positively related to (a) business competitiveness and (b) firm success.

#### Novel operational method awareness

The third dimension of employee creativity management capability is novel operational method awareness. Operation capability is broadly perceived as a key factor in combinations of complex activities that operate in firms to develop or improve the efficiency and productivity, which relate to production capabilities, the flow process of materials into firms, and the advancement of technology (Yu et al., 2014). Wu et al. (2010) are observing the firms that have the new methods of operation can help to increase systematic opportunities and challenges of the common process encourage the business operations that are important to improve new processes in organizational innovation development. Oke and Kach (2012) found that the new method of operation that can create differentiated skills, processes, and routines. It is an improvement, development, and implements for new operational processes that have highly efficient performance. Therefore, novel operational method awareness in this research is defined as the organization's ability to realize the potential of new thinking, new methods and new techniques to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness, which are

critical for organizations to achieve goals and gain competitive advantage over competitors (Wu et al., 2010). Krasnikov and Jayachandran (2008) provide relevant evidence that supports the connection between operations capabilities and increasing competitive advantage are the crucial importance of requirements for business competitiveness. Azadegan (2011) is convinced that the novel operational method and linking using the common process are particularly important to generate and maintain business competitiveness. Focusing on building the new method of operating as a major engine can be used to achieve goals and strategies that drive a firm's success (Hammer, 2004). Based on the relevant literature, novel operational method awareness is more likely to increase business competitiveness and firm success. Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**Hypothesis 3:** novel operational method awareness is positively related to (a) business competitiveness and (b) firm success.

#### Job improvement value focus

The fourth dimension of employee creativity management capability is job improvement value focus. Aswathappa (2005) provided the job improvement value denotes important concepts of motivational enhancement that are added more challenging, or rewarding to the job. Focusing on job improvement value is to soothe the chronically bored employees that stemmed from excessive specialization tend to be mass production that can building a source of job satisfaction. It is a root of enhancing motivation for the employee and can bring the greatest goal to the organization by focusing on behavior (Orpen, 2011). Therefore, job improvement value focus in this research is defined as organization's ability to inspire employees by concentrating worth adding to daily tasks and more responsibility to create meaningful, challenging, and interesting tasks which are important that helps organization become successful (Rey-Martí et al., 2016). Ruthankoon and Ogunlana (2003) provided evidence to support the important driving force of job satisfaction and also considers are the factor such as job improvement which is regarded as elements to create and maintain job satisfaction is still a key tool to achieve firm success. Orpen (2011) suggested that job improvement value that can build employee satisfaction and performance in the workplace, which implies that job improvement value leads to increasing employee performance which can be considered a part of achieving a business competitiveness. Based on the relevant literature, job improvement value focus will have a positive influence on business competitiveness and firm success. Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**Hypothesis 4:** job improvement value focus is positively related to (a) business competitiveness and (b) firm success.

### **Creative solution usefulness competency**

Creative solution usefulness competency is the last dimension of employee creativity management capability. The role of an ability to solve problems creatively is the most crucial thing in performing in an organization due to new problems can have on every day (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Creative problem solving reflects the processes of crucial creativity that link with the building which compose the action of identifying and construction, the acquisition of information, and concepts, as well as the implementation that contains the assessment, the selection, and planning (Reiter-Palmon & Illies, 2004). Therefore, creative solution usefulness competency in this research is defined as the organization's ability that provides support to employee to find a way to be more diverse, pursue new possibilities, create new alternative, and think outside the box for a problem-solving of organization in order to help achieve organizational business goals and objective (Althuizen & Wierenga, 2014). A creative solution is important in the organization that demonstrated by the creativity employees in order to find a solution to the problems in the organization, and the creative solution of organizations can be used as the competitive engine to gain and maintain business competitiveness (Ray & Romano, 2013). Generally, studies have found that creativity in an organization is associated with a creative solution, which the investigation found that individual creativity to solving problems for achieving firm success when it is also in the same situation (Carmeli et al., 2013). Based on the relevant literature, creative solution usefulness competency is more likely to increase business competitiveness and firm success. Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**Hypothesis 5:** Creative solution usefulness competency is positively related to (a) business competitiveness and (b) firm success.

## **2.2 The consequences of employee creativity management capability**

### **Business competitiveness**

The concept of competitiveness linked to the strategy and operations of an organization. It is a factor that explains the fundamental strength of the economy because it relates to competitors in competitive markets for goods, services, skills, and concepts. It is a superior competitive ability over others in design, manufacturing, service, and product which can be considered superior performance from both monetary and non-monetary value (Ambasta & Momaya, 2004). In this research, business competitiveness is defined as the potential of organizations to manage and operate business better than a competitor, which is the ability to provide good customer service, generate innovation, and maintain quality (Testa et al., 2011). Prasertsang, Ussahawanitchakit, and Jhundra-Indra (2012) provided the relationship between firm competitiveness and corporate sustainability, which demonstrates that the business competitiveness and firm success are regarded as a significant mechanism that is essential to create corporate sustainability in a rapidly changing business environment. In building a business competitiveness of organizations, there are a variety of approaches to

achieve business competitiveness, including strategies implementation that enhances the ability of an organization, such as a cost leadership strategy and a differentiation strategy to gain a firm success (Tan et al., 2015). Based on the relevant literature, business competitiveness will have a positive influence on firm success and corporate sustainability. Therefore, the hypotheses are posited as follows:

**Hypothesis 6:** business competitiveness is positively related to (a) firm success and (b) corporate sustainability.

#### **Firm success**

The organization operates to achieve organizational goals and objectives, both in terms of finance and marketing, consisting of customer relationship management, customer satisfaction, sales growth, market share, and profitability, that can build corporate sustainability in future (Cadez & Guilding, 2008).

Waranantakul et al. (2013) provided an understanding of firm success as the operation to achieve the prime goals, which introduces the four major perspectives of the performance consisting of finance, customer, internal business process, and growth. Therefore, firm success in this research is defined as the achievement of the business to have income and profits according to the goals, the growth rate of market share, the financial position and the performance that are higher (Maltz et al., 2003). There are important for organizational survival and growth. Chatman and Barsade (1995) suggested that firm success related to strategic capabilities, is a key factor to the success of the organization, because the organization can be used as a competitive weapon for it to gain success in a challenging and rapidly-changing market. Based on the relevant literature, firm success will have a positive influence on corporate sustainability. Therefore, the hypothesis is posited as follows:

**Hypothesis 7:** firm success is positively related to corporate sustainability.

#### **Corporate sustainability**

Corporate sustainability that originates from the developing and supporting corporate capabilities is a significant tool to gain or maintain a long-term competition (Johannessen & Olsen, 2003). In this research, corporate sustainability is defined as the long-term performance of firms that are increasing continuously and maintain profitability in both profit and non-profit success (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). Developing of corporate sustainability is a prime tool in reducing the cost of production, risk management process, and new product development for a corporation to enjoy sustained, above-normal returns in the long-term (Azapagic, 2003).

### 3. Research methodology

#### 3.1 Sample selection and data collection procedure

Furniture exporting businesses in Thailand is chosen as the data source to manifest the empirical research. The population in this research is 740 firms that were acquired from the database of the Department of International Trade Promotion Ministry of Commerce in Thailand. One of the reasons for choosing furniture exporting businesses is because it is business processes and operations based on the firm's managerial ability to enhance and accelerate employee creativity. It means that firms usually apply creativity in business processes and operations with furniture exporting. A mail survey procedure via the questionnaire was utilized for data collection. However, with regard to the questionnaire mailing, 68 surveys were undeliverable because some firms moved to the unknown locations. As the result, 144 responses were received. Only 139 surveys were usable. Thus, the response rate was approximately 20.68 %. To test potential and non-response bias, the comparison between early and late respondents demonstrate that no significant difference between groups, which implied that this study is without non-response bias problems.

#### 3.2 Variable measurement

Multiple items for construct measurement are used to measure each construct in the model.

Each of these variables is measured by five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagreement) to 5 (strongly agreement) because the questions in a survey are to measure perceptions of each variable (Newell & Goldsmith, 2001). The variable measurements of dependent and independent and the control variable are clarified as follows:

##### 3.2.1 Dependent variables

Corporate Sustainability (CSU) is measured by a four-item scale which involves the increase continuously and maintain profitability such as maintain the quality of products and services, market share, business growth, continuous profitability, reputation, acceptance.

##### 3.2.2 Independent variables

This research has seven Independent variables are composed of 1) new ideas generation orientation (NIG) is measured by four-item scale, 2) working practice originality implementation (WPO) is measured by four-item scale, 3) novel operational method awareness (NOM) is measured by four-item scale, 4) job improvement value focus (JIV) is measured by four-item scale, 5) creative solution usefulness competency (CSC) is measured by a four-item scale, 6) business competitiveness (BUC) is measured by a four-item scale, and 7) firm success (FSU) is measured by a four-item scale.

##### 3.2.3 Control variables

This research recognizes the importance of firm age and firm size that may affect the hypothesized relationships, and both variables are determined as control variables. Firm age (FA) is measured

by the number of years that the firm has operated in the business. It is the dummy variable in this study (0 = less than or equal to 15 years, 1= more than 15 years). Firm size (FS) is evaluated by the number of employees currently registered full-time in an organization. It is the dummy variable in this study (0 = less than or equal to 150 employees, 1= more than 150 employees).

### 3.3 Reliability and validity

This study employs a pre-test as a technique for preliminary analysis to improved data collection instruments. The first 30 received surveys are selected to test the validity and reliability of the instrument. Table 1 demonstrates reliable and valid assessments of this study. The factor loadings range from 0.637 to 0.818. These values are greater than the cut-off score of 0.4, which indicate acceptable construct validity (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1999). Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients range from 0.706 to 0.767. These values are greater than 0.70, which indicate acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Hair et al., 2006).

**Table 1** Results of Measure Validation

Constructs	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Corporate Sustainability (CSU)	0.725 - 0.818	0.764
New Ideas Generation Orientation (NIG)	0.693 - 0.788	0.750
Working Practice Originality Implementation (WPO)	0.673 - 0.783	0.748
Novel Operational Method Awareness (NOM)	0.725 - 0.806	0.748
Job Improvement Value Focus (JIV)	0.675 - 0.789	0.728
Creative Solution Usefulness Competency (CSC)	0.706 - 0.793	0.732
Business Competitiveness (BUC)	0.712 - 0.814	0.767
Firm Success (FSU)	0.687 - 0.795	0.734

### 3.4 Statistical Techniques

The ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis is used to test and examine the hypothesized effects of five dimensions of employee creativity management capability on consequences (business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability). As all dependent variables, independent variables, and control variables in this study are categorical and interval data, OLS as an appropriate approach to examining the hypothesized relationships. The equation relationship of the regression models are demonstrated as follows:

$$\text{Equation 1: } BUC = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 NIG + \beta_2 WPO + \beta_3 NOM + \beta_4 JIV + \beta_5 CSC + \beta_6 FAG + \beta_7 FSI + \varepsilon_1$$

$$\text{Equation 2: } FSU = \alpha_2 + \beta_8 NIG + \beta_9 WPO + \beta_{10} NOM + \beta_{11} JIV + \beta_{12} CSC + \beta_{13} FAG + \beta_{14} FSI + \varepsilon_2$$

$$\text{Equation 3: } FSU = \alpha_3 + \beta_{15} BUC + \beta_{16} FAG + \beta_{17} FSI + \varepsilon_3$$

$$\text{Equation 4: } \text{CSU} = \alpha_4 + \beta_{18} \text{BUC} + \beta_{19} \text{FSU} + \beta_{20} \text{FAG} + \beta_{21} \text{FSI} + \varepsilon_4$$

#### 4. Results and Discussion

Table 2 illustrated the descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for all variables. The finding indicate that new ideas generation orientation, working practice originality implementation, novel operational method awareness, job improvement value focus, creative solution usefulness competency, business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability, having the mean 4.40, 4.38, 4.46, 4.43, 4.48, 4.44, 4.43, and 4.48 as well as having the standard deviation 0.42, 0.43, 0.39, 0.40, 0.39, 0.43, 0.42, and 0.43 respectively.

The variance inflation factors (VIF) in equation 1- 4 ranged from 1.098 to 2.267 were below the cut-off value of 10. Therefore, the results of regression analysis in this research indicate acceptable the cut-off value (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variables	NIG	WPO	NOM	JIV	CSC	BUC	FSU	CSU
Mean	4.40	4.38	4.46	4.43	4.48	4.44	4.43	4.48
S.D.	0.42	0.43	0.39	0.40	0.39	0.43	0.42	0.43
WPO	.411***							
NOM	.331***	.537***						
JIV	.326***	.343***	.414***					
CSC	.280***	.370***	.353***	.521***				
BUC	.346***	.413***	.366***	.444***	.364***			
FSU	.348***	.324***	.326***	.395***	.400***	.572***		
CSU	.345***	.436***	.438***	.359***	.359***	.483***	.636***	
FA	.140	.186**	.137	.107	.087	.104	.059	.205**
FS	.090	.102	.160	.094	.034	.021	.047	.026

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05

Regarding Table 3, the results of OLS regression analysis illustrates that the first dimension, new ideas generation orientation is significantly and positively related to firm success (H1a:  $\beta_1 = 0.180$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In terms of new ideas generation orientation, the significant relationship between new ideas generation orientation and firm success are involved in clarifying by new ideas generation, which is a significant engine of firm success (Heong et al, 2012). Thus, **Hypothesis 1a is supported**. Meanwhile, for the relationship among new ideas generation orientation has no significant effect on business competitiveness (H1a:  $\beta_8 = 0.132$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ). Walsh et al. (2016) stated that new ideas generation will positively relate to the competitiveness of an organization. However, dissimilarity on organizational culture in the USA context, which is Western culture, will lead to lower collaboration and commitment to new ideas generation for furniture exporting businesses in Thailand. There is not necessarily to be a way that will guarantee to a bright and successful for an organization.

Skerlavaj et al. (2014) also recommended excessive idea generation can lead to diminished business competitiveness. There is not earned merely through new ideas generation that supports business competitiveness. Likewise, new ideas generation of the firm is also likely to reduce business competitiveness. Therefore, new ideas generation orientation has no effect on business competitiveness. **Therefore, Hypothesis 1b is not supported.**

Secondly, it is found that working practice originality implementation, the second dimension, also illustrated significant and positive effects on business competitiveness (H2a:  $\beta_2 = 0.193$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). For the relationship between working practice originality implementation and business competitiveness, working practice has the potential to significantly change with business competitiveness for building business performance and success (Zacarias & Martins, 2012). **Thus, Hypothesis 2a is supported.** Meanwhile, the relationship between working practice originality implementation has no significant effect on firm success (H2b:  $\beta_9 = 0.074$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ). Notwithstanding, the working practice is positively related to firm success, allowing more efficiency than the organizations does not have a working practice. However, if an employee has not engaged in the planning of working practice, and it is also possible that employees don't feel strongly connected with the working practice, which is not intended or appropriate for the organization (Mendelson, 2000). Possibility, this empirical examination of furniture exporting businesses in Thailand might be an indirect effect on firm success, due to working practice originality implementation will vary depending on the work environment, situations, conditions, and individual personality differences. There is varied working practice on how to improve performance efficiency and do not cover every eventuality. **Thus, Hypothesis 2b is not supported.**

Thirdly, the finding indicates that novel operational method awareness shows non-significant influence on business competitiveness (H3a:  $\beta_3 = 0.087$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ), and firm success (H3b:  $\beta_{10} = 0.088$ ,  $p > 0.10$ ). Due to the limitation of the appropriation of resource, time, and budget that have been verified by the firms characteristic response, which the majority of furniture exporting businesses in Thailand has firm capital less than 10,000,000 Baht. The perspective of organizational resources which consists of time and budget are extremely difficult to managing the required resources for an operation which can reduce the effectiveness of an organization due to improper resource allocations (Hamilton et al., 1998). As a result, the novel operational method awareness has no effect on business competitiveness and firm success. **Hence, Hypotheses 3a and 3b are not supported.**

Table 3: Result of Regression Analysis of Employee Creativity Management Capability and Its Consequences

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
	BUC	FSU	FSU	CSU
	H1-5a	H1-5b	H6a	H6b, 7
	Equation 1	Equation 2	Equation 3	Equation 4
New Ideas Generation Orientation (NIG)	.132 (.082)	.180** (.085)		
Working Practice Originality Implementation (WPO)	.193** (.093)	.074 (.095)		
Novel Operational Method Awareness (NOM)	.087 (.091)	.088 (.094)		
Job Improvement Value Focus (JIV)	.254*** (.090)	.172* (.093)		
Creative Solution Usefulness Competency (CSC)	.093 (.088)	.204** (.091)		
Business Competitiveness (BUC)			.572*** (.071)	.158** (.078)
Firm Success (FSU)				.538*** (.078)
Firm age (FA)	.062 (.255)	-.087 (.263)	-.038 (.245)	.568*** (.222)
Firm size (FS)	-.113 (.154)	-.013 (.158)	.076 (.148)	-.102 (.134)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.267	.224	.189	.436*
Maximum VIF	1.612	1.612	1.098	1.499

\* p < 0.10, \*\*. p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01, Beta coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis

Fourthly, the finding indicates that job improvement value focus is significantly and positively associated with business competitiveness (H4a:  $\beta_4 = 0.254$ , p < 0.01), and firm success (H4b:  $\beta_{11} = 0.172$ , p < 0.10). An organization with job improvement enhances the long-term business value and business competitiveness (Doloi, 2007). Job improvement is significant factors that are essential to produce firm success in order to rapidly adapt to change in the organization (Aina & Omoniyi, 2014). Thus, **Hypotheses 4a and 4b are supported**.

Finally, the research reveals that creative solution usefulness competency is significantly and positively associated with firm success (H5b:  $\beta_{12} = 0.204$ , p < 0.05). Kuo et al. (2014) indicate that creative solution influence firm success. **Therefore, Hypotheses 5b is supported**. Meanwhile, creative solution usefulness competency has no significant effect on business competitiveness (H5a:  $\beta_5 = 0.093$ , p > 0.10). The possible that creative solution usefulness competency in business is important, but in the context of furniture exporting businesses in Thailand have the intensity of global market and growing extensity are a high cost operating environment which may affect decreased business competitiveness (Gokiene & Dagiliene,

2011). From the reason above creative solution usefulness competency has no significant effect on business competitiveness. Therefore, **Hypothesis 5a is not supported**.

For the hypothesis testing, the results from Table 3 suggest that business competitiveness has a significant effect on firm success (H6a:  $\beta_{15} = 0.572$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and corporate sustainability (H6b:  $\beta_{18} = 0.158$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Business competitiveness is a firm's ability to acquire, develop, and exploit existing resources, which is a critical factor required for driving a firm's success (Testa et al., 2011). Thus, business competitiveness is a tool for resisting competition by improvement of firm's ability. Moreover, business competitiveness tends to lead to firm success and corporate sustainability. Hence, **Hypotheses 6a and 6b are supported**. As can be seen from Table 3, the significant effect of firm success on corporate sustainability was found (H7:  $\beta_{19} = 0.538$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results imply that firm success affects corporate sustainability due to firms accomplishing and developing can create more effective and can lead to corporate sustainability. The previous research shows that firm success is critical to the development and execution of long-term success, which can then lead to corporate sustainability (Lozano et al., 2015). Thus, **Hypothesis 7 is supported**.

## 5. Contributions

### 5.1 Theoretical contributions and future directions for research

Firstly, this study proposes five newly-distinctive dimensions of employee creativity management capability that include: new ideas generation orientation, working practice originality implementation, novel operational method awareness, job improvement value focus, and creative solution usefulness competency; especially, job improvement value focus. Secondly, this study provides an empirical evidence for understanding of the relationship among five dimensions of employee creativity management capability and corporate sustainability through business competitiveness and firm success.

### 5.2 Managerial contributions

The emphasis in this research is on the managerial implications and, in particular, applications for practitioners (including managing directors and managing partners, top management, and executives). The usefulness of employee creativity management capability plays a crucial role in stimulating and enhancing business competitiveness, firm success and leads to corporate sustainability. Therefore, it is the foremost importance of furniture exporting businesses in Thailand to pay attention. Particularly, job improvement value focus can promote business competitiveness, firm success, and corporate sustainability.

## 6. Conclusions and suggestions for future research

This study attempts to investigate the relationship among employee creativity management capability's dimensions and its consequences in furniture exporting businesses in Thailand. The regression analysis results demonstrate that new ideas generation orientation and working practice originality

implementation have a significant positive effect on business competitiveness. Job improvement value focus has a significant positive influence on business competitiveness and firm success. Creative solution usefulness competency has a significant positive influence on firm success. Moreover, business competitiveness has a significant positive influence on firm success that in turn positive influence on corporate sustainability.

Suggestions for future research, some dimensions of employee creativity management capability (i.e. novel operational method awareness) have no significant impact on the consequence. Therefore, future research may examine the same phenomenon of prior research by using qualitative methods that are several different methods and techniques, such as in-depth interviews and focus group, in order to confirm the variable measurements and verify the conceptual framework of employee creativity management capability. Challenges for future research can use the different group of sample and can compare different population groups from other business in order to verify and expand the potential utility of the results in this study.

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