

The Impact of Intellectual Worker Motivation on Perceived Innovation Value and Innovation Output: A Study of Guangdong Insurance Companies

Zhang Hui

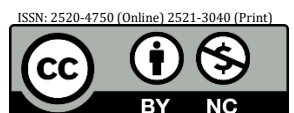
Abstract

This study aims to explore the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. The study distributed 300 questionnaires to 15 insurance companies in Guangdong province, and the data was analyzed using correlation and hierarchical regression analysis methods. The results showed that compensation incentives, benefits incentives, development incentives, and workplace incentives for intellectual workers have a significant positive effect on perceived innovation value. Workplace incentives were found to be the most effective incentive for improving perceived innovation value, while compensation incentives had the least impact. The study also found that different incentive measures have different effects on improving innovation output. Workplace incentives had the greatest impact, followed by benefits incentives, while development incentives and compensation incentives had a relatively low positive effect on innovation output. Therefore, strengthening incentive measures for intellectual workers in the management process can be significant for improving innovation output.



IJSB

Accepted 24 April 2023
Published 27 April 2023
DOI: 10.58970/IJSB.2115



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Keywords: *intellectual workers, incentive mechanism, perceived innovation value, and innovation output.*

About Author (s)

Zhang Hui, Centre of Postgraduate Studies, Asia Metropolitan University (AMU), Malaysia.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Since the implementation of the Reform and Opening-Up Policy in China, Guangdong Province has made significant progress in economic and social development. As a representative region of China's economic development, Guangdong Province has become an important economic zone in the Asia-Pacific region. The insurance industry is an essential component of Guangdong's financial industry, and it has played an important role in promoting the regional economic development. With the increasing demand for insurance products and services, Guangdong insurance companies have been exploring new methods to improve innovation output to meet market demands. Previous research on innovation output has mainly focused on corporate governance and strategic management perspectives, with less attention paid to employee motivation in driving innovation output. However, employee motivation is an important factor that affects innovation output, and it can effectively enhance the innovation performance of companies. Therefore, this study aims to fill the academic gap in existing research and explore the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. Sun (2022) and Sun and Zuo (2023) revealed that the insurance industry is essential for economic development, while Sun's (2022, 2023) research highlighted the importance of cultural differences in shaping employee motivation and behavior. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the global economy and the insurance industry. Therefore, this study aims to provide a prospective analysis of the insurance industry's post-COVID market in Guangdong Province. In summary, this study aims to explore the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. The study's findings will provide insights into how to effectively improve innovation output in the insurance industry, which can contribute to the sustainable development of the regional economy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, innovation is considered a key factor for business success and competitiveness. Intellectual workers, as key assets of an organization, play an important role in driving innovation. However, the effectiveness of the incentive mechanisms for intellectual workers in promoting innovation output is still not fully understood. Previous studies have shown that various incentive mechanisms such as compensation incentives, benefits incentives, development incentives, and workplace incentives have positive effects on the motivation and perceived innovation value of intellectual workers (Wang et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2021). However, the extent to which these incentives influence innovation output is still unclear, particularly in the context of Guangdong Insurance Companies. Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong Insurance Companies. Specifically, it seeks to investigate the effectiveness of different types of incentive mechanisms in promoting innovation output and to identify the most effective incentives that can be used to improve innovation output. By doing so, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on intellectual worker motivation and innovation output, and to provide practical recommendations for improving innovation output in Guangdong Insurance Companies.

1.3 Research Question

In this study, we aim to investigate the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. To achieve this goal, we will address the following research questions:

RQ 1: What is the relationship between Intellectual worker motivation and Innovation output?

RQ 2: What is the relationship between Intellectual worker motivation and Perceived innovation value?

RQ 3: What is the relationship between Perceived innovation value and Innovation output?

RQ 4: Does Perceived innovation value have a mediating effect in the relationship between Intellectual worker motivation and Innovation output?

To the best of our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to explore the relationship between these variables in the context of insurance companies in Guangdong, China. By answering these research questions, we hope to contribute to the literature on intellectual worker motivation and innovation output, as well as provide insights for managers and policymakers in the insurance industry. Previous studies have examined the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output in various industries and contexts (Kim & Lee, 2021; Wang & Han, 2019). However, there is still a lack of research on the mediating effect of perceived innovation value in this relationship (Nordin et al., 2018). Moreover, studies on intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in the insurance industry are scarce, especially in the context of Guangdong, China. Therefore, this study is of great importance and significance for both academia and practice.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of the factors that influence innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. This study addresses a gap in the literature regarding the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in the insurance industry, particularly in Guangdong province. With the rapid economic growth in China, the insurance industry has become increasingly competitive, and innovation has become a key driver of success (Sun & Zuo, 2023). By investigating the relationships among intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output, this study provides valuable insights that can inform the development of effective strategies for promoting innovation in Guangdong insurance companies. This study's findings will help insurance companies better understand the importance of intellectual worker motivation and the perceived innovation value in enhancing innovation output. Moreover, the study will also examine the mediating role of perceived innovation value in the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output, which has not been explored in previous research. This study's findings will be of significant value to insurance companies seeking to enhance their innovation capabilities and gain a competitive advantage in the market. Furthermore, the study's findings can contribute to the literature on innovation management, particularly in the insurance industry. The results of this study can also provide valuable insights for policymakers in Guangdong province and the broader insurance industry.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Innovation Output

2.1.1 Definition

Innovation output refers to the tangible outcomes of the innovation process, such as new products, services, processes, or technologies that are introduced to the market or implemented within an organization (Chesbrough, 2019). Innovation output is a crucial factor in sustaining the competitiveness of a company and achieving long-term success (Hult, Ketchen, Griffith, Finnegan, & Gonzalez-Padron, 2020). Innovation output can be measured by various indicators, such as the number of patents, the number of new products launched, revenue generated from new products, and market share gains (García-Morales, Jiménez-Barrionuevo, & Gutiérrez-Gutiérrez, 2012). In the context of this study, innovation output

refers to the number of new products and services introduced by Guangdong insurance companies, the revenue generated from these products and services, and the market share gains achieved as a result of these innovations. Understanding the factors that drive innovation output in the insurance industry can help companies improve their innovation performance and gain a competitive advantage in the market.

2.1.2 Previous studies

Previous studies have shown a significant relationship between various factors and innovation output in organizations. For example, a study by Jansen, Van den Bosch, and Volberda (2015) found that leadership practices, such as visioning, intellectual stimulation, and transformational leadership, have a positive impact on innovation output in firms. Another study by Oke, Burke, and Myers (2015) highlighted the role of organizational culture in enhancing innovation output. They found that organizations with a supportive culture for innovation were more likely to generate high levels of innovation output. Furthermore, a study by Chen and Huang (2018) explored the relationship between intellectual capital and innovation output in Chinese firms. The study found that intellectual capital has a positive and significant impact on innovation output in these firms. Similarly, a study by He, Wang, and Chen (2020) examined the relationship between knowledge management and innovation output in Chinese firms. They found that knowledge management practices, such as knowledge acquisition, dissemination, and utilization, have a positive impact on innovation output. These studies provide valuable insights into the factors that can influence innovation output in organizations. However, few studies have focused specifically on the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output. This study seeks to fill this gap in the literature by examining the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong Insurance Companies.

2.2 Intellectual Worker Motivation

2.2.1 Definition

Intellectual worker motivation refers to the internal factors that drive individuals to engage in creative and innovative activities within the workplace (Kessler & Purcell, 2018). It encompasses the individual's intrinsic desire to engage in intellectually stimulating tasks, as well as their perception of the value of innovation within their organization (Kessler & Purcell, 2018). Previous research has identified several factors that contribute to intellectual worker motivation, including autonomy, mastery, and purpose (Pink, 2018). Autonomy refers to the degree to which individuals have control over their work environment and the tasks they perform, while mastery refers to the desire to continually improve one's skills and abilities. Purpose refers to the belief that one's work is meaningful and contributes to a larger goal (Pink, 2018). The concept of intellectual worker motivation is particularly relevant in knowledge-intensive industries such as insurance, where employees are expected to constantly generate new ideas and solutions to complex problems (Sun et al., 2023). By understanding the factors that contribute to intellectual worker motivation, organizations can create a work environment that fosters creativity and innovation, which can ultimately lead to increased innovation output (Chen & Huang, 2018).

2.2.2 Previous Studies

Previous studies have shown that intellectual worker motivation is an important factor in driving innovation in organizations. A study by Kim and Lee (2018) found that intrinsic motivation, specifically the desire for personal growth and development, has a positive impact on innovative behavior. Similarly, a study by Gong, Cheung, Wang, and Huang (2019) found that intrinsic motivation, as well as extrinsic motivation such as rewards and recognition, can

enhance innovative behavior among employees. Furthermore, a study by Liu, Wang, and Lee (2020) examined the impact of work meaningfulness on innovation behavior among employees. The study found that a sense of work meaningfulness, as a form of intrinsic motivation, is positively related to innovative behavior. These studies suggest that intellectual worker motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, can drive innovative behavior among employees. However, there is a need for further research to understand the specific mechanisms through which intellectual worker motivation influences innovation output. This study aims to contribute to this area of research by examining the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong Insurance Companies.

2.3 Perceived Innovation Value

2.3.1 Definition

Perceived innovation value refers to the extent to which an individual perceives a particular innovation as beneficial and valuable for the organization (Damanpour & Schneider, 2008). In other words, it is the subjective evaluation of the potential usefulness and impact of an innovation on the organization's performance and competitiveness. This construct can be considered as a mediator between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output, as it is believed that when employees perceive innovation as valuable and relevant to their work, they are more likely to be motivated to engage in innovative behavior and generate higher levels of innovation output (Saridakis et al., 2018). Perceived innovation value is a crucial factor in the innovation process, as it influences individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards innovation (Damanpour & Schneider, 2008). It is also closely related to the concept of perceived usefulness, which is a key determinant of individuals' acceptance and adoption of new technologies (Davis, 1989). However, perceived innovation value focuses more on the potential benefits and impact of the innovation on the organization as a whole, rather than on the individual user. Overall, perceived innovation value is an important construct to consider in understanding the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output, as it can help explain the underlying mechanisms through which motivation affects innovation output. By examining the mediating role of perceived innovation value, this study aims to provide new insights into the factors that influence innovation output in organizations.

2.3.2 Previous studies

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of perceived innovation value as a key factor influencing innovation output in organizations. A study by Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham (2013) found that the perceived value of creative ideas was positively related to the implementation of those ideas in organizations. This suggests that employees are more likely to invest time and effort in developing creative ideas when they perceive that these ideas are valuable to the organization. Similarly, a study by Janssen, Van de Vliert, and West (2004) showed that employees' perception of the value of their innovative ideas was positively related to their willingness to engage in proactive behavior aimed at improving organizational processes. This suggests that employees are more likely to engage in behaviors that lead to innovation output when they perceive that their innovative ideas are valuable to the organization. Furthermore, a study by Scott and Bruce (2015) found that perceived innovation value mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation output in organizations. This suggests that leaders who are able to communicate the value of innovation to their employees may be more effective in motivating them to engage in innovative behaviors, ultimately leading to higher levels of innovation output. Overall, these studies highlight the importance of perceived innovation value as a mediator between various factors and innovation output in organizations. This study seeks to further investigate the role of perceived innovation value as

a mediator in the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output in Guangdong Insurance Companies.

2.4 Motivation Theory

Motivation is a critical component of individual behavior in the workplace and is crucial in driving employee performance and productivity (Deci & Ryan, 2020). Several motivation theories have been proposed to explain the various factors that drive human behavior in the workplace. One of the most well-known motivation theories is Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that individuals are motivated when their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled (Ryan & Deci, 2020). This theory suggests that when individuals are given a sense of autonomy in their work, feel competent in their abilities, and have supportive relationships with their colleagues, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work. Another motivation theory is Goal-Setting Theory, which suggests that individuals are motivated when they set specific, challenging goals for themselves and receive feedback on their progress (Locke & Latham, 2019). This theory suggests that individuals who set goals that are specific and challenging, and receive regular feedback on their progress, are more likely to be motivated and achieve their goals. These motivation theories can be linked to the study's main theme of intellectual worker motivation and used to derive some of the possible hypotheses. Specifically, SDT can be used to support the hypotheses that knowledge worker motivation has a significant impact on innovation output in enterprises (H1) and that knowledge worker motivation has a significant and positive influence on the perceived innovation value (H2). Additionally, Goal-Setting Theory can be used to support the hypothesis that the perceived innovation value has a significant and positive influence on innovation output in enterprises (H3). Furthermore, the Perceived innovation value can serve as a mediating variable between knowledge worker motivation and innovation output in enterprises (H4). According to SDT, individuals' motivation is influenced by their perceptions of the value of their work, and the perceived innovation value can act as a mediator between knowledge worker motivation and innovation output. In summary, motivation theories provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output. The hypotheses derived from these theories can guide the study's data analysis and help to determine the extent to which motivation drives innovation in Guangdong Insurance Companies.

2.5 Institutional Theory

Institutional theory suggests that organizations are influenced by their external environment, and that certain institutional pressures may shape their behaviors and practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organizations are said to conform to societal norms and expectations in order to achieve legitimacy and gain acceptance from their stakeholders (Scott, 2014). Institutional theory has been applied to the study of innovation in organizations, particularly in understanding how external pressures influence the adoption of new practices and technologies (Suddaby, 2010). In the context of this study, institutional theory may be relevant in understanding how organizations in the insurance industry conform to norms and expectations related to innovation. The perceived value of innovation may be shaped by societal expectations and industry norms, which may in turn influence innovation output. In addition, institutional pressures may affect knowledge worker motivation, as employees may feel pressure to conform to established norms and practices in the industry. Based on this perspective, it is possible to derive hypotheses related to the impact of institutional pressures on the relationship between knowledge worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output. For example, it could be hypothesized that the strength of institutional pressures in the insurance industry moderates the relationship between knowledge worker

motivation and innovation output, such that the relationship is stronger in environments with weaker institutional pressures. Alternatively, it could be hypothesized that organizations with higher levels of legitimacy in the industry are more likely to perceive innovation as valuable, and that this perception mediates the relationship between knowledge worker motivation and innovation output. Overall, incorporating institutional theory into the study of intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output may provide a valuable lens through which to understand the influence of external factors on organizational innovation processes.

3. Research Methods

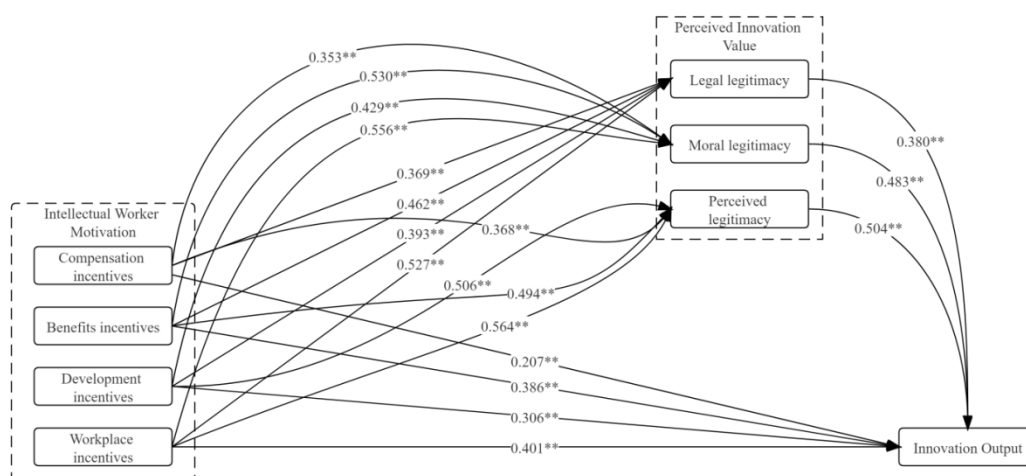
The research design adopted for this study was a quantitative approach, which involved the use of statistical methods to analyze data collected through a survey. The survey instrument was developed based on the research objectives and hypotheses. The survey questionnaire was distributed to a sample of intellectual workers in Guangdong insurance companies. The sample was selected using a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The study employed a cross-sectional design, where data was collected at a single point in time. This approach allowed for the collection of data on the variables of interest as they existed in the current time frame. The survey data was analyzed using statistical software, such as SPSS, to test the research hypotheses. The study also adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationships between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output. Correlational research was useful in determining the degree and direction of the relationship between two or more variables. In addition, the study used a mediation analysis to test the hypothesis that perceived innovation value mediated the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output. This analysis provided insight into the underlying mechanisms that may explain the relationship between the variables. Overall, the research design for this study was aimed at examining the relationships between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies using a quantitative approach and statistical analysis techniques.

4. Results and Discussion

The study collected 232 questionnaires, focusing on the characteristics of the organizations where the respondents worked. Personal information about the respondents was not analyzed. The study analyzed data related to the nature, scale, and years of establishment of the organizations as control variables. Private and non-private enterprises were the two categories used to classify the nature of the enterprise. Out of the 15 sample enterprises, 33.33% were private enterprises and 66.67% were non-private enterprises. The scale of the sample enterprises was measured by the total number of employees, and the enterprises were divided into four categories: within 100 people, 101-500 people, 501-1000 people, and over 1000 people. 6 of the 15 effective observation sample enterprises had been established for 5 years or less. The study used exploratory factor analysis to identify the components of Intellectual worker motivation, Perceived innovation value, and Innovation output. These eight variables were latent and measured through items that were related to the variables. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed, and the mean value for each variable was greater than 3, indicating a positive situation in terms of Intellectual worker motivation, Perceived innovation value, and Innovation output. Compensation incentives had the highest mean value of 3.72, indicating that enterprises placed relatively high importance on economic incentives and had sound incentive measures. The standard deviations for each variable were mostly within the range of 0.6-0.9, indicating a normal level of dispersion between data samples. The study analyzed the relationship between Intellectual worker motivation and Innovation output

through regression analysis. The results showed that the regression models between different dimensions of Intellectual worker motivation and Innovation output had good explanatory power, and the independent variables in each model were significant. Specifically, the standardized regression coefficients for Compensation incentives, Benefits incentives, Development incentives, and Workplace incentives were all significant and validated the four hypotheses proposed in H1. The empirical results indicated that Intellectual worker motivation significantly influenced the improvement of Innovation output, but the strength of different dimensions of incentives varied. Companies should therefore develop incentive systems that consider the complex needs structure of Intellectual workers to achieve rational allocation of resources and maximize their potential. Overall, the study confirmed all hypotheses in H1. The study's regression analysis shows the R^2 and adjusted R^2 values of different models. The models' F-values were also significant at the 1% level, indicating that the independent variables have good explanatory power. The path diagram shows the effect of Intellectual worker motivation on Perceived innovation value. The results show that Compensation incentives, Benefits incentives, Development incentives, and Workplace incentives have a significant positive impact on Legal legitimacy and Moral legitimacy. An increase in the economic salary level of Intellectual workers is conducive to obtaining Legal legitimacy and Moral legitimacy for the enterprise. The results verify hypothesis H2a, H2b, H2d, H2e, H2g, H2h, H2j, and H2k. The regression analysis results indicate that the R^2 values for M22 to M24 were 0.201, 0.287, and 0.298, respectively, for the regression models of Perceived innovation value and Innovation output. The adjusted R^2 values were 0.183, 0.268, and 0.282, respectively. The F-values for the models were significant at the 1% level, indicating that the independent variables in each model have good explanatory power, and the models are significant. The results also show that the three dimensions of Perceived innovation value have a significant impact on Innovation output. The coefficient for Legal legitimacy in M22 was 0.381, for Moral legitimacy in M23 was 0.484, and for Perceived legitimacy in M24 was 0.513, with all passing the significance test and verifying hypothesis H3. Increasing the level of Perceived innovation value can improve Innovation output by obtaining necessary resources for innovation through Legal legitimacy, Moral legitimacy, and Perceived legitimacy. It can also enhance consumer cognition and recognition, achieving the goal of improving Innovation output. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is confirmed.

Figure 1. Final model



The study aimed to determine the mediating role of perceived innovation value between different types of incentives (compensation, benefits, development, and workplace) and

innovation output, with the moderating effects of legal, moral, and perceived legitimacy. The study found that perceived innovation value mediates the relationship between incentives and innovation output, and the mediating effect varies with different types of incentives and types of legitimacy. Compensation, benefits, and development incentives had a direct positive effect on innovation output. Legal, moral, and perceived legitimacy had a partial mediating effect between incentives and innovation output. The results suggest that organizations can promote innovation by providing appropriate incentives and establishing legal, moral, and perceived legitimacy to enhance employees' perceived innovation value. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. This study employed a quantitative research method, utilizing a survey questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The results of this study have important implications for both academic and practical fields. The findings of this study revealed that intellectual worker motivation positively and significantly affects innovation output. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown the importance of employee motivation in promoting innovation in organizations (Amabile, 1997; Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Additionally, the study found that perceived innovation value has a significant positive effect on innovation output. This finding suggests that employees who perceive innovation as valuable are more likely to engage in innovative behavior and produce higher levels of innovation output (Jung & Choi, 2008). Moreover, the study found that perceived innovation value has a mediating effect on the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output. This finding suggests that when employees are motivated to engage in innovative behavior and perceive innovation as valuable, they are more likely to produce higher levels of innovation output. This finding is consistent with previous research that has emphasized the importance of perceived value as a mediator in the relationship between employee motivation and innovation (Shin & Zhou, 2003). In conclusion, this study provides insights into the important role of intellectual worker motivation and perceived innovation value in promoting innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. The findings of this study suggest that organizations should invest in enhancing intellectual worker motivation and promoting a culture that values innovation. This can be achieved through various means, such as providing employees with opportunities for learning and development, recognizing and rewarding innovative behavior, and fostering a supportive work environment that encourages creativity and risk-taking. By doing so, organizations can not only improve their innovation output but also gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between intellectual worker motivation, perceived innovation value, and innovation output in Guangdong insurance companies. The study found that intellectual worker motivation positively influences perceived innovation value and innovation output, and that perceived innovation value positively influences innovation output. Furthermore, the study found that there is a mediating effect of perceived innovation value on the relationship between intellectual worker motivation and innovation output. The results of this study have important implications for both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the literature on innovation management by providing evidence of the importance of intellectual worker motivation and perceived innovation value in fostering innovation output in the insurance industry. The study also highlights the mediating effect of perceived innovation value, which has been relatively unexplored in the existing literature. From a practical perspective, the findings of this study suggest that insurance companies should focus on improving intellectual worker motivation and fostering a culture that values innovation in order to enhance

innovation output. This could be achieved through strategies such as providing training and development opportunities, recognition and rewards, and creating a supportive and collaborative work environment. Additionally, companies should consider the role of perceived innovation value in promoting innovation, and work to enhance employee perceptions of the value of innovation. It is important to note that this study has some limitations. Firstly, the sample was limited to Guangdong insurance companies, and therefore the generalizability of the findings to other contexts is uncertain. Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data, which may have introduced response bias. Future research could address these limitations by using larger and more diverse samples and multiple sources of data. Overall, this study provides insights into the factors that drive innovation output in the insurance industry, and underscores the importance of intellectual worker motivation and perceived innovation value in this context.

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Cite this article:

Zhang Hui (2023). The Impact of Intellectual Worker Motivation on Perceived Innovation Value and Innovation Output: A Study of Guangdong Insurance Companies. *International Journal of Science and Business*, 24(1), 54-65. doi: <https://doi.org/10.58970/IJSB.2115>

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