

EMPLOYEES' ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION: CASE OF KOREAN PRIVATE HOSPITALS

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Abstract— Amid unprecedented infectious power and prolonged conditions caused by the coronavirus 19, the introduction of a new management paradigm and innovative strategy of the medical organization is urgently needed. However, in healthcare organizations where human resources are particularly important, it is almost impossible to achieve goals without the efforts of workers. Therefore, this paper reports an empirical study conducted to examine the relationship between employees' entrepreneurship, job engagement, and organization innovation. Also, noting that the length of service can strengthen or weaken this process, it was analyzed by setting it as a moderator variable. A representative sample of 347 employees from the private hospital of South Korea was collected, using a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method with the help of AMOS and Spss 23 analysis packages. The finding shows that there is a positive relationship between employees' entrepreneurship, job engagement, and organizational innovation, and the length of service moderated the relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and job engagement, organizational innovation. The theoretical and practical implications of this study are also presented based on the results.

Keywords—Employees' Entrepreneurship, Job Engagement, Organizational Innovation, Length of Service, Private Hospitals.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, all environments in the service sector are rapidly changing due to the effects of Corona 19. As such, the medical community and society as a whole have fallen into a management crisis due to the prolonged coronavirus 19, and major changes are expected throughout the hospital environment and medical service delivery system. To respond to these changes, medical institutions are attempting to change in many ways. In addition, in recent years, hospitals have introduced innovative hospital management, increasing customer satisfaction due to the hospital's oversupply[1]. As such, the Korean medical market is also entering an era of fierce competition, such as the entry of corporate hospitals into the medical market, the opening of the medical market, and the specialization of medical subjects and hospitals. As infinite competition in the medical market intensifies, each medical institution continues to seek innovation in services and products to diversify hospital services and provide differentiated medical services to meet the needs of patients[1]. In other words, the increased quantities of medical institutions expanded the opportunity for hospital selection and diversified the needs of patients. Innovation is thought to play a big role in surviving this competition. Hospital organizations have developed by adapting well to a stable environment through the efforts and cooperation of competent and dedicated medical professionals. However, in the future, the medical environment has become more complicated to solve problems in hospitals only with individual excellence and dedication, and the era has come when people are forced to be eliminated in a fiercely competitive environment, ignoring change and innovation[2].

Innovation is the first concept introduced by Schumpeter(1994), and is the parent of entrepreneurship[3]. Innovation is a driving force for economic development by "breaking away from everyday activities and combining all human and physical factors anew." A new combination refers to the propensity to pursue R&D, continuous development of new products and new services, improvement of production technology, and general technology enhancement. Innovation refers to the process of entrepreneurs converting market-oriented ideas into business opportunities, and allows them to create new products, services and processes as individuals or businesses that support new ideas, novelty, experimental and creative processes[2]. Therefore, innovation is one of the key factors required for entrepreneurs, and research on entrepreneurship that started in the private sector has been expanded to non-profit organizations such as public organizations and hospitals, and the proportion is gradually increasing[4]-[7].

In the case a hospital, Innovations in the delivery of health care can result in more convenient, more effective, and less expensive treatments for today's time-stressed and increasingly empowered health care consumers[8]. However, most previous prior studies have studied entrepreneurship at the managerial level and the relationship between innovation performance[9]-[11].

It is the case in all organizations, but in hospital organizations, where human resources are particularly important in terms of number and technology, it is difficult to achieve any kind of hardware change without changing the behavior of employees. In other words, it is important to introduce a management system and advanced technology to improve medical quality, but it is difficult to achieve successful change without following the behavioral patterns of individual employees through entrepreneurship. Therefore, this study seeks to identify how employees' entrepreneurship affects organizational innovation and job engagement. In addition, to check how the relationship between these factors varies according to the length of service, the working period was set as a moderator variable.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND JOB ENGAGEMENT

The study of entrepreneurship began in the United States and by 2000 most studies were conducted in the United States. Thereafter, studies were conducted actively in Greece, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Slovenia, and China[12]. Schumpeter(1973) is a representative scholar in explaining the concept of entrepreneurship, who described it as a creative act of a person changing society, defining it as an act for entrepreneurs to adapt creatively to environmental change[13].

In subsequent studies, entrepreneurship is slightly different and more widely defined by researchers, and the most widely accepted definition of entrepreneurship is "the pursuit of opportunities without considering the resources currently under control" mentioned by Stevenson et al.(1994)[14]. Miller(1983) then divided entrepreneurship into detailed elements for innovation, progressive and risk-sensitivity to create new values[15]. As such, entrepreneurship has continued to evolve according to the times and environment, not specifically defined. Therefore, this study emphasized that the entrepreneurship of employees is as important as the entrepreneurship of the CEO, and set the research subject as an organizational member. In a recent study, employees' entrepreneurship has been used as a variable that influences corporate performance and achievement of corporate objectives, drawing attention as an important factor that guarantees a company's performance[16]. Yang Woo-suk(2018) conducted a study on employees of overseas subsidiaries, and international entrepreneurship have a positive impact on organizational commitment and job commitment[17].

Many empirical studies that investigated the relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and job engagement. Therefore, this study presents the following hypothesis, expecting that the entrepreneurship of employees in the Korean medical industry will have a positive effect on job engagement based on the results of previous studies as above.

H1: There is a positive and direct significant relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and job engagement in the South Korean healthcare industry.

2.2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

A company's CEO always thinks about a company to survive in the market. As the pace of development of science and technology is faster than ever, it is emerging as an important issue for organizational innovation or companies to consider[18]. Moreover, today, within firms with a corporate entrepreneurial approach, the extent to which new product development is considered vital and followed by its members is higher than others[19]. Entrepreneurship and organizational innovation are decisive issues for all organization which attempts to compete in this competitive entrepreneurial world economy Existing studies on entrepreneurship have explained that the entrepreneurship of members of the organization eventually leads to organizational innovation performance[20], [21].

Morris et al.(1996) have stated in their study that employees who perceive positive resources for entrepreneurial activities, management support, discretion at work, time availability, found showcasing innovation behaviors[22]. Goodale et al.(2011) conducted research on 177 companies to determine the impact of sub-factors of entrepreneurship on corporate innovation performance and found that entrepreneurship can significantly improve organizational innovation[23].

Based on the results of previous studies and the practical context discussed above, it was confirmed that the entrepreneurship of employees had a positive effect on organizational

innovation. Therefore, to understand the relationship between employee entrepreneurship and organizational innovation at Korean private hospitals, we test the following proposed hypothesis.

H2: There is a positive and direct significant relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and organizational innovation in the South Korean healthcare industry.

2.3. JOB ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

Members who are immersed in the organization tend to identify themselves with the organization, so they are expected to pursue innovation for the development of themselves and the organization. Employee participation is directly related to job performance and organizational performance because many organizational scientists have empirically or theoretically identified the relationship between these factors. According to a study by Hewitt(2015), employee participation is one of the organizational competition factors that ultimately leads to competitive advantage and achievement of goals for innovation performance[24]. In addition, according to a study in Hoque AS et al.(2017), research result is employee engagement has a positive significant upshot on innovation performance of the firms[4]. In a study on the impact of entrepreneurship of young sports club managers of Baek Sung-wook (2017), research results reported that job engagement has a positive impact on innovation behavior[25]. Also, in a study on job engagement and innovative behavior by Mo Young-bae(2016), job engagement of organizational members has a positive impact on innovative behavior[26].

These results mean that supporting entrepreneurial ideas can be called to opportunities, directly triggering workers' innovative actions. These employees' innovation behaviors lead to organizational innovation. As such, according to the results of many empirical studies examining the influence relationship between job engagement and organizational innovation, it was found that job engagement is an important factor that can explain organizational innovation. Therefore, in the case of Korean private hospitals, this study attempts to verify the following hypothesis to understand the relationship between job engagement and organizational innovation.

H3: There is a positive and direct significant relationship between job engagement and organizational innovation in the South Korean healthcare industry.

2.4. THE MODERATING EFFECT OF LENGTH OF SERVICE

The length of service is express variously depending on the researcher. Such as duration of service, organizational tenure, employment, job tenure, and length of service, etc. In other words, length of service is referred to the length of time who have worked continuously at a job or holds a position. It refers to a period from a certain period time belonging to an organization to another period of time[27]. Many previous studies have verified and confirmed the moderating effect according to the duration of service in the relationship between various variables[28].

Previous studies have found that the relationship between employee commitment and job performance or the performance of members of the organization evolves dynamically as service time increases[29]-[32]. These findings show that the length of service can work favorably or unfavorably in the relationship between employees' job commitment and performance. Thus, we believe that length of service is moderating the impact of entrepreneurship on organizational innovation performance and job engagement. To test the hypothesis, "1" was measured for less than 5 years of service, and "2" for more than 5 years of service. The hypotheses are as follows:

H4a: The relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and job engagement is stronger for workers who have a long length of service than for those with a short length of service.

H4b: The relationship between employees' entrepreneurship and organizational innovation is stronger for workers who have a long length of service than for those with a short length of service.

H4c: The relationship between employees' job engagement and organizational innovation performance is stronger for workers who have a long length of service than for those with a short length of service.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. SAMPLES AND STATICAL METHOD

The private hospital sector of South Korea is the target of this study. Therefore, this study will focus on the employees in hospitals. Due to time and financial limits, the total questionnaire for this study was given to 347 workers from the hospital sector in Gyeongnam-Do, South Korea. The SPSS and AMOS statistical packages were used to analyze the data. AMOS SEM analysis explains the causal relationship among variables to verify the hypothesis, that is to say, to explore the relationship among the employees' entrepreneurship, job engagement and organizations innovation. Finally, a multi-group analysis was conducted to verify the difference in the research model path according to the length of service.

3.2. RESEARCH MODEL AND MEASURES

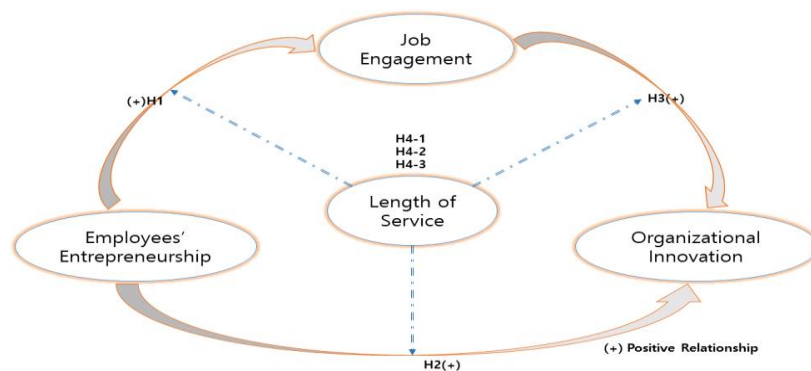


Fig. 1 Research Model

Measures: The questionnaires were divided into two sections. The first portion of the questionnaire is based on the respondent demographics, and the second label of the study is related variables.

In the **first part**, the following four demographic questions were asked: 1) Gender, 2) Age, 3) Department of work, and 4) Working period.

The second part of the questionnaire included questions about variables. All the constructs were measured using five-point Likert-type scales. The items of all constructs were adapted from previous existing scales. Nine items adapted from Lim, Jung-Hee et

al.(2019) were used to measure entrepreneurship[33]. The six items adapted from Hameed et al.(2018) and Sok et al.(2015) were used to measure organizational innovation respectively[34], [35]. Finally, four items were used for job engagement adapted from Schaufeli(2003)[36].

The operational definition of all the constructs included the employees’ entrepreneurship, job engagement, organizational performance, and length of service. Entrepreneurship consists of three sub-factors: innovation, risk sensitivity, and initiative, and its definition is operatively defined as the thoughts and will of members of the organization to create new values for the organization by always pursuing opportunities. Job engagement is a level at which employees actively perform their duties by identifying themselves with their duties and judge that the value of job performance is important, and is conceptualized according to the research context. Next, organizational innovation refers to intentional organizational change efforts to increase organizational efficiency. Finally, length of service is referred to as the time an employee works for a particular organization.

4. RESULTS

4.1. THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 provides the demographic profile of the respondents who participated in this survey. Out of the usable questionnaires, 288 (83%) were from females and 59 (17 %) were from males. Based on age, 101 (29.1%) of the respondents were 20-29 years old, 97 (28%) were between 30-39 years old, 96(27.7%) were between 40-49 years old, and 53(15.3%) were 50 years old or over. In addition, most of the respondents (a total of 193, 55.6%) were working in a department as a nurse or nurse’s assistant. Moreover, the respondents’ working periods were mainly less than 5 years which was equivalent to 148 (42.7 %) respondents.

Table 1. Respondents’ Demographic Profiles

Demographics	Categories	Frequency (N = 347)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	59	17%
	Female	288	83%
Age	20-29	101	29.1%
	30-39	97	28%
	40-49	96	27.7%
	50 and over	53	15.3%
Department	Doctor	32	9.2%
	Administration	68	19.9%
	Nurse, nurse's assistant	193	55.6%
	Other	54	15.6%
Working period	Less than 5 years	148	42.7%
	5-10 years	36	14.6%
	10-15 years	49	14.1%
	More than 15 years	99	28.5%

4.2. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Reliability refers to the degree of questionnaire consistency; it represents the consistency of scores obtained by the same group of subjects when answering questions in the questionnaire, where credibility and stability can be from the test scores. In the reliability analysis test, the most common is the internal consistency reliability, which was also used to analyze the Cronbach's alpha as shown in Table 2.

The Cronbach's alpha was .923 for employees' entrepreneurship, .900 for job engagement. Finally, for organizational innovation, Cronbach's alpha was .931. Therefore, the Cronbach's coefficient α estimates for seven variables were more than .90, which was considered acceptable.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis

Construction	Items	Cronbach's α
Employees' Entrepreneurship	9	.923
Job Engagement	4	.900
Corporate Innovation	6	.931

4.3. CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

The measurement model was evaluated, and convergent validity was assessed using loadings, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR). For models with the goodness of fit to data, the values were the following: CMIN=333.311, CMIN/df=1.247, CFI=.893, TLI=.853, IFI=.895, NFI=.626, GFI=.898, AGFI=.873 RMR=.050, RMSEA=.042. Most of the factor loadings exceeded the recommended value of .60 for all items. In addition, all of the CR values exceeded the recommended value of .70. According to the analysis, CR values were found to be .8(.839~.926) and AVE values over .6(.611~.7005) for all variables. Also, all of the AVE values for all under-study constructs were beyond the recommended values of .50. Nevertheless, the one question item employees' entrepreneurship7 was deleted based on a (.50) value. The result of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Items	Estimate	S.E.	t-value	C.R	AVE
E-ESHIP9	.782	-	-	.926	.611
E-ESHIP8	.672	.069	13.22		
E-ESHIP6	.863	.063	18.065		
E-ESHIP5	.854	.064	17.834		
E-ESHIP4	.824	.06	17.006		
E-ESHIP3	.806	.062	16.532		
E-ESHIP2	.655	.072	12.819		
E-ESHIP1	.768	.064	15.547		

JE1	.825	-	-	.900	.694
JE2	.796	.062	17.043		
JE3	.85	.057	18.735		
JE4	.859	.058	19.001		
OI6	.712	-	-	.839	.700
OI5	.817	.072	14.808		
OI4	.867	.078	15.724		
OI3	.901	.086	16.323		
OI2	.854	.086	15.475		
OI1	.856	.085	15.514		

Abbreviation: E-ESHIP => Employees' Entrepreneurship, JE=> Job Engagement, OI=> Organizational Innovation

4.4. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The correlations among the variables were analyzed as shown in Table 4. The comparison of AVE and correlation value square root. As a result of comparing the correlation square root value of all two variables and value of AVE, the correlation square root value is lower than the value of all AVEs. In addition, no pair of measures is found with correlation that exceeds 0.9, indicating no multi-collinearity exists among the constructs.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

Items	E-ESHIP	JE	OI
Employees' Entrepreneurship	.611		
Job Engagement	.609	.694	
Organizational Innovate	.353	.314	.700

Notes: * The square root of the Ave value is in bold type on diagonal. *p<0.01

4.5. PATH ANALYSIS

The results of the path analysis are shown in Table 5. The values of model fit indices chi-square=200.453, D/F=156, p=.000, GFI=.918, AGFI=.890, RMR=.067, RMSEA=.034 were above the threshold values and indicates a good model fit. Therefore, hypotheses testing through path analysis were appropriate to proceed. As shown in Table 5, all hypotheses are supported. In H1, employees' entrepreneurship had a significant positive direct effect on job immersion of a firm ($\beta=.834$, $p<.001$). In H2, employees' entrepreneurship had a positive direct effect on organizational innovation ($\beta=.417$, $p < .001$). In H3, job engagement had a positive direct effect on organizational innovation ($\beta=.212$, $p < .05$).

Table 5. Path Analysis

Hyp.	Relationship	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P value	Result
H1	E-ESHIP → JE	.834	.065	14.104	.000	Supported
H2	E-ESHIP → OI	.417	.095	4.003	.000	Supported
H3	JE → OI	.212	.086	2.072	.038*	Supported
CMIN=201.215, df=157, CMIN/DF=1.265, GFI=.921, AGFI=.892, NFI=.721, IFI=.908, TLI=.882, CFI=.902, RMR=.065, RMSEA=.031						

(P ≤ 0.05*, P ≤ 0.01**, P ≤ 0.001***)

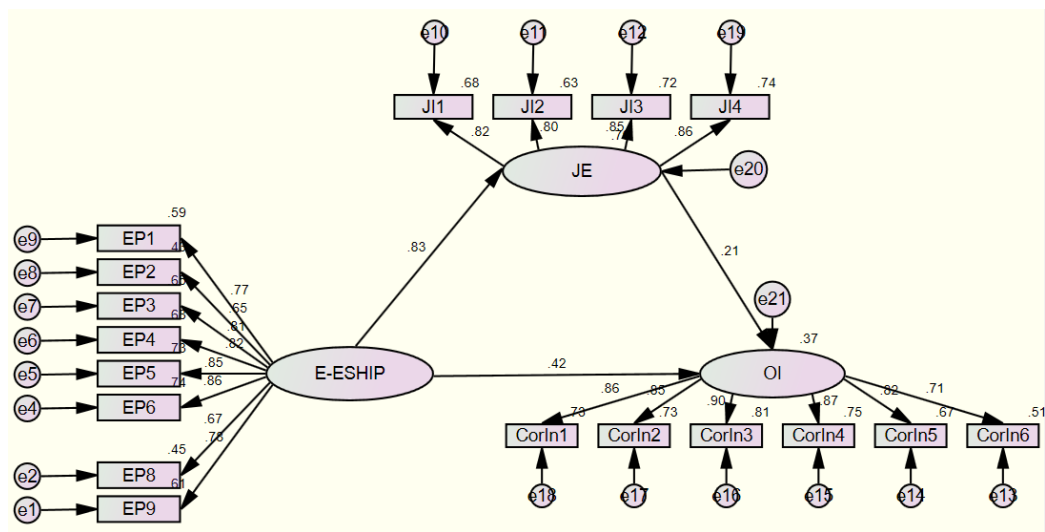


Fig. 2 Result for Amos SEM

4.6. MODERATING EFFECT ANALYSIS RESULTS

The study investigates the length of service in hospitals as a moderator of the relationships among employees' entrepreneurship, job engagement, and organizational innovation. To test these hypotheses, this study conducted multigroup path analyses after dividing the samples into two groups based on the length of service (LoS). The result received partial support Table 6. To examine the differences according to the length of service, a multi-group analysis was conducted by dividing into a less than five years group (n = 199) and a more than five years group (n = 148). As a result of the analysis, Hypothesis 4a, that the effect of employees' entrepreneurship on job engagement will vary according to the length of service, the path coefficient was ($\Delta\chi^2/(df=1)=16.015$, $p > .001$), and for a significance level of 1%, the hypothesis was adopted. Hypothesis 5b, that the effect of employees' entrepreneurship on organizational innovation will vary according to the length of control, the path coefficient was ($\Delta\chi^2/(df=1)=8.891$, $p > .05$), and the hypothesis was supported for a significance level of 5%. Finally, Hypothesis 5c, that the effect of job engagement on organizational innovation will vary according to the length of service, the path coefficient was ($\Delta\chi^2/(df=1)=.417$, $p < .05$), and the hypothesis was rejected, As shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Multi-Group Path Analyses

Hyp.	Relationship	Short length N=199	Long length N=148	Free Model	Default Model	$\Delta\chi^2$ ($\Delta df=1$) Result
		loading	loading			
H4a	E-ESHIP → JE	.770 (9.714)	.885 (10.243)	1128.589	1144.604	16.015 (.000)
H4b	E-ESHIP → OI	.415 (3.268)	.810 (10.220)		1137.480	8.891 (.003)
H4c	JE → OI	.226 (2.085)	.192 (2.085)		1129.006	.417 (.519)

**Significance level 5% , $\chi^2(1) \geq 3.84$, *Significance level 10% , $\chi^2(1) \geq 2.70$

The slopes in Figure 3 indicate that the effect of employees' entrepreneurship on job engagement and organizational innovation seems to be greater for employees with the long length of service than for employees with the short length of service.

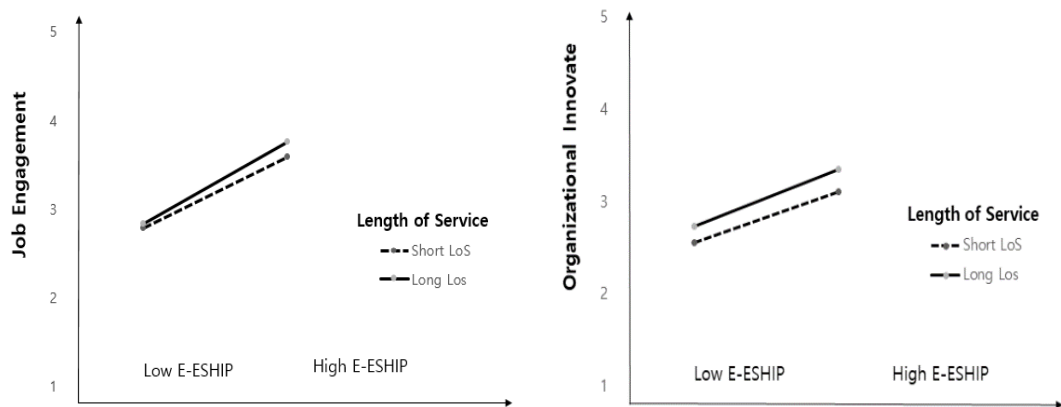


Fig.3 Moderating effects of the length of service in the company (LoS) between employees' entrepreneurship(E-ESHIP) and job engagement (JE) and (b) employees' entrepreneurship (E-ESHIP) and organizational innovation(OI).

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to empirically identify the relationship between job engagement and organizational innovation of employees' entrepreneurship for private hospital staff in South Korea. In addition, by dividing the length of service into less than five years and more than five years, the difference in the influence relationship of each model route according to the length of service was verified. The findings and implications are as follows.

First, Hypothesis 1 and 2 were adopted. Employees' entrepreneurship appears to have a positive impact on job engagement and organizational innovation. This result shows that the entrepreneurship of employees has a significant role in shaping job engagement and organizations innovation. This is the same results as previous studies that it forms a job engagement and organizational innovation through entrepreneurship[37].

Second, Hypothesis 3, which stated that job engagement that to achieve organizational innovation performance, job engagement must first be backed up.

These findings suggest that an entity needs to actively conduct systematic training and explore internal factors that can stimulate motivation to shape or enhance the employees'

entrepreneurship. Employees' Entrepreneurship needs to be approached and viewed from the perspective of the entire life cycle of the company, not simply the functional competency required to influence corporate performance. In addition, it is necessary to imprint a shift in perception that prefers a future-oriented challenge culture that pursues new values while challenging new work methods and new work environments rather than preferring stable work methods. To this end, companies will need an attitude that listens to and supports the voices of employees, such as granting them work autonomy so that they can pursue continuous innovation. These internal environments and management attitudes not only shape the entrepreneurship of employees but also have a positive impact on job engagement. The results of this study show that organizational innovation can also be increased through the mediated effects of job engagement[38].

Finally, Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c which stated that the coefficients of individual pathways in the model would differ depending on the length of service, were all partially adopted. Hypothesis 4a and 4b were supported. In other words, the relationship between the employee's corporate spirit and job commitment was found to be strengthened as the service period was longer than when the service period was shorter. But Hypothesis 4c was rejected. Therefore, this shows that once job engagement has been formed, the results of the organizational innovation resulting from job immersion cannot be changed easily due to further external factors length of service, etc. In general, it supported the research results of previous studies that the longer the tenure, the greater the identity and attachment of employees to the organization or occupation to which they belong[39]. Therefore, the organization should increase work efficiency by forming an attachment to the organization by fairly providing the work environment, welfare, and promotion opportunities so that employees do not easily leave the organization. A comprehensive summary of the implications of this study is entering a period when innovative thinking, activities, and consequent performance are more important than ever today when the Fourth Industrial Revolution or the pandemic is rapidly changing. In other words, such innovative thinking and entrepreneurship will become the basis for innovative performance or the source of competitiveness.

Limitations and future research directions

This study was conducted within the scope of private hospital workers, including doctors, nurses, and administrative staff, and in future studies, studying the effects of entrepreneurship for each job will contribute more to providing practical implications. In addition, this study has validated job engagement and organizational innovation with a focus on employees' entrepreneurship, and it would be desirable to conduct more in-depth qualitative studies to find many leading influencing factors not covered in this study. Finally, this study was conducted on employees working in general hospitals using convenience sampling methods. Therefore, the results of this study may not represent all medical institutions in Korea. Thus, in future studies, more practical implications could be derived if the empirical analysis were conducted using stochastic sampling methods to increase the representation of the study.

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