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## ARTÍCULO DE INVESTIGACIÓN

### **Identificación de la matriz de dimensiones de innovación adecuadas para la organización de seguridad social / 10.5281/zenodo.7382644**

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#### **Resumen**

Las organizaciones con mayor capacidad de innovación tienden a responder mejor y más rápido a los desafíos ambientales y, por lo tanto, logran un mayor desempeño organizacional. Este estudio trató de identificar la variedad de dimensiones de innovación que se adaptarían a la organización de seguridad social iraní. La investigación fue de naturaleza descriptivo-analítica, y una fase documental en términos del enfoque adoptado para recopilar datos secundarios. En cuanto al método de implementación, fue una investigación cualitativa realizada mediante entrevistas con preguntas abiertas y luego realizando un análisis temático. Los expertos a entrevistar fueron elegidos entre la población de gerentes empleados en la sede de tratamiento de la Organización de Seguridad Social de la provincia de Teherán, de los cuales finalmente se entrevistó a 13 personas. Para mejorar la validez, se implementó el método de atención a las recomendaciones técnicas de los expertos, dirigido principalmente a cómo mejorar las características positivas y controlar las negativas. A través del análisis temático de los datos recopilados de las entrevistas, se construyó un modelo inicial para la variedad de dimensiones de innovación que se adaptarían a la Organización de Seguridad Social de Irán. En este análisis, se identificó un total de 33 subtemas de los 11 temas siguientes: Ampliación de las capacidades intelectuales, rediseño del sistema de motivación, evaluación de necesidades y formación aplicada, crear una infraestructura para facilitar la innovación reestructuración para facilitar la innovación, modificar el sistema de reclutamiento para contratar personal creativo, fomentar una cultura de aceptación del cambio, fomento de las innovaciones basadas en procesos, fomentar las innovaciones de comportamiento, fomento de las innovaciones administrativas y Fomento de las innovaciones técnicas.

**Palabras clave:** Dimensiones de la Innovación, Método Cualitativo, Entrevista en profundidad, Análisis Temático, Organización de la Seguridad Social.

#### **Abstract**

### **Identification of The Array of Innovation Dimensions Suitable for The Social Security Organization**

Organizations with higher innovation capacity tend to respond better and faster to environmental challenges and therefore achieve higher organizational performance. This study tried to identify the array of innovation dimensions that would suit the Iranian social security organization. The research was developmental in its purpose, descriptive-analytical in nature, and a library research in terms of the approach taken to collecting

secondary data. In terms of the implementation method, it was a qualitative research performed by conducting interviews with open-ended questions and then performing a thematic analysis. The experts to be interviewed were chosen from among the population of managers employed in the treatment headquarters of the Social Security Organization of Tehran province, of whom ultimately 13 people were interviewed. To improve validity, the method was implemented with attention to the technical recommendations of experts in relation to how to enhance positive features and control negative features. Through the thematic analysis of the data collected from the interviews, an initial model was built for the array of innovation dimensions that would suit the Iranian Social Security Organization. In this analysis, a total of 33 subthemes in the 11 following themes were identified: Expanding intellectual capacities; Redesigning the motivation system; Needs assessment and applied training; Creating an infrastructure to facilitate innovation; Restructuring to facilitate innovation; Modifying the recruitment system to hire creative personnel; Nurturing a culture of acceptance of change; Fostering process-based innovations; Fostering behavioral innovations; Fostering administrative innovations; Fostering technical innovations.

**Keywords:** Innovation Dimensions, Qualitative Method, Interview, Thematic Analysis, Social Security Organization

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## 1.- Introduction

Organizational innovation is a path to organizational progress and success and a main determinant of whether an organization can remain competitive in challenging environments. Organizations can use the knowledge of their employees and other human resources to foster organizational innovation (Kraus, 2004).

Innovation can be described as the generation of new ideas and thoughts. There are two definitions for innovation. From a psychological point of view, innovation is one of the main aspects of thinking, with thinking defined as the process of retrieving and changing information in long-term memory. From an organizational point of view, innovation means generating and presenting new creative thoughts and ideas for the improvement and progress of the organization (Kashanaki, 2017).

Chen et al. have defined innovation as generating new knowledge and ideas to use in the business, to achieve new business outcomes, to set goals for improving business processes and structures, and to create diverse products and services (Chen et al., 2004).

By definition, innovation means coming up with something new and therefore adding to the existing knowledge. In fact, many scholars consider innovation along with technological knowledge as the outputs of the knowledge creation process. One of the distinctive features of knowledge creation and therefore innovation is that knowledge can be regarded as the most important organizational resource in the domain of skills

and competencies. Knowledge creation refers to a collaborative process in which learning and skill enhancement takes place and innovation is made as the output (Lundvall and Nielsen, 2007, p. 214).

Hedayati et al. have defined three dimensions for organizational innovation: production innovation, process innovation, and administrative innovation. Production innovation means using creativity as a tool to enhance production and develop and deliver new and improved services. This dimension is measured by the ability to achieve and maintain leadership in providing new products/services, the effort put into developing new services by training organizational personnel and team building, and the ability to develop diverse products and services for new customer groups. Process innovation refers to the use of creativity as a tool to maintain and improve the quality of processes or for cost or time-saving purposes. This dimension is measured by the ability to change production/service processes, to find new solutions and ways of doing things, and to achieve and maintain leadership in providing new solutions and methods. Administrative innovation refers to the use of creativity to adopt new organizational procedures, policies, and forms. Administrative innovation is measured by the ability to find and use new administrative systems (e.g. for recruitment and hiring), to achieve and maintain leadership in providing new administrative systems, and to create new intra-organizational structures and relationships.

Torrance believes that creativity and innovativeness have four dimensions:

- 1- Fluency, which refers to the ability to establish a relationship between thought and expression and is measured by how many solutions are proposed for a given problem;
- 2- Originality, which refers to the ability to generate new, different, unique solutions for a given problem
- 3- Flexibility, which refers to the ability to think of different ways to solve a problem;
- and 4- Elaboration, which is the ability to expand on an idea and come up with details to craft an elaborate solution (Shoghi and Haj Fathali, 2012).

Some scholars believe that a person's creativity and innovativeness are influenced by six factors:

- 1- Knowledge: A person may have limited knowledge in a specific field, but can gain experience and expertise in that field over the years.
- 2- Intellectual ability: It refers to a person's ability to create and present creative ideas and find new links between phenomena.
- 3- Thinking style: To solve a problem, creative people tend to use creative thinking styles rather than the usual methods and styles of the organization.
- 4- Motivation: When creative people come up with a creative idea, they are motivated to implement their idea.
- 5- Personality: Creative people tend to have unique personality traits like being resilient against problems and internal and external pressures, being determined, and thinking less about acting like others and giving up.
- 6- Environment: Creative people express themselves much better if they are placed in environments that support them (Kashanaki, 2017).

It is tempting to think of innovation as a linear process starting with the emergence of a new scientific finding and then progressing with a technological invention and then the introduction of the innovation to the market as a new product or service. Recent

models of innovation treat knowledge creation/creativity as an interactive process where the company's interactions with customers, suppliers, and knowledge institutions are important for the outcome. Empirical analyses confirm that companies rarely innovate alone. An important implication is that any analysis of innovation and knowledge creation at the firm level must take into account the firm's position in the network and the degree to which it can absorb competence from abroad. Learning organizations combine internal organizational processes. Innovation can be described as a method of interactive learning in which the involved people increase their competence by participating in the innovation process. Successful product innovation takes place when the firm organizes itself in a way that promotes learning (Lundvall and Nielsen, 2007, p. 214).

The distinctive feature of organizational innovation is a novelty in execution and implementation. The fundamental challenge of research into organizational innovation is how to determine the characteristics of innovative organizations and how to organize and coordinate these characteristics (Hedayiti et al., 2016, p. 115).

Organizations with innovation capacity are likely to respond better and faster to environmental challenges than non-creative organizations; a trend that highlights the importance of creativity and innovation for organizational performance (Jimenez et al., 2008). Considering the above, this study aimed to identify the array of innovation dimensions that would suit the Iranian Social Security Organization.

## **2. Research background**

In a study by Pasebani (2015) titled "Presenting a Model for Promoting Innovation and Organizational Learning Using Critical Success Factors of Knowledge Management in the Automotive and Propulsion Industries", using the previous findings, the researcher identified seven key factors of knowledge management: organizational culture, knowledge sharing, rewarding employees, knowledge-based strategies and policies, senior management support, human resources management, and information technology. This study found that all of these seven factors have a positive effect on organizational innovation and learning.

A study by Hedayati et al. (2016) titled "Mediating Role of Knowledge Management in Relationship between Learning Culture and Organizational Innovation on Employees of Babol Medical Science University" found that organizational learning has a significant positive effect on organizational innovation with a standard path coefficient of 0.41, which means organizational learning predicts 41% of variations in organizational innovation. This study reported that knowledge management also has a significant positive effect on organizational innovation with a standard path coefficient of 0.36, which means knowledge management predicts 36% of variations in organizational innovation.

In a research titled "Relations between transformational leadership, organizational learning, knowledge management, organizational innovation, and organizational performance: an empirical investigation of manufacturing firms", Noruzy et al. (2013) found that organizational learning has a positive effect on organizational innovation, knowledge management has a positive relationship with organizational innovation, and

knowledge management strategies promote the creation and increase the demand for new behaviors in the organization. In this research, it was stated that organizational learning is one of the main requirements for organizational success as it informs the methods, performance, and competitive advantage needed for success.

In a study by Ju et al. (2006), titled "A contingency model for knowledge management capability and innovation", it was found that the level of organizational learning, knowledge integration and knowledge management ability has a significant effect on product innovation and process innovation of the business.

The results of a research by Liao et al. (2008) titled "Relationships between knowledge inertia, organizational learning and organization innovation" showed that knowledge inertia is comprised of learning inertia and experience inertia, and there are the following relationships between these three variables. First, knowledge inertia affects organizational innovation through organizational learning. Second, organizational learning performance increases when members of a firm either have less learning inertia or more experience inertia. These researchers introduced two components for innovation named administrative innovation and technical innovation and reported that organizational learning has a positive effect on organizational innovation.

In a study titled "System perspective of knowledge management, organizational learning, and organizational innovation", Liao and Wu (2010) surveyed a sample of Common Wealth Magazine's Top 1000 manufacturers and Top 100 financial firms in 2007 by e-mail. This study found that organizational learning mediates the relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation, and that knowledge management is an important input for the process of organizational learning which then generates organizational innovation as the output. They also stated that while knowledge management has a significant direct effect on organizational innovation, it has an even greater impact on organizational innovation through organizational learning.

In a research by Kör and Maden (2013) titled "The Relationship between Knowledge Management and Innovation in Turkish Service and High-Tech Firms", these researchers reported that knowledge management and organizational innovation have a significant impact on innovation; knowledge management has a positive relationship with organizational innovation; and organization innovation has a mediating role in the relationships between knowledge management and administrative innovation and between knowledge management and technical innovation. In this research, it was assumed that knowledge management is comprised of three components called knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and knowledge application, which all showed a positive effect on all types of innovation in the organization.

### **3. Research method**

This research was developmental in its purpose, as it adds to human knowledge in a specific field, was descriptive-analytical in nature, and was library research in terms of the approach taken to collecting secondary data. In terms of the implementation method, it was qualitative research performed by conducting interviews with open-ended questions and then conducting a thematic analysis. The experts to be interviewed were

chosen by purposeful sampling from the population of managers employed in the treatment headquarters of the Social Security Organization of Tehran province, of whom ultimately 13 people were interviewed. The interviews continued until reaching theoretical saturation. The chosen research method was implemented with due attention to credibility requirements in each stage of the research so that the results would be sufficiently trustworthy and reliable. To improve validity, the method was also implemented with attention to the technical recommendations of experts in relation to how to enhance positive features and control negative features. The data obtained from the interviews were subjected to thematic analysis to build an initial model for the array of innovation dimensions that would suit the Iranian Social Security Organization. The step-by-step process of thematic analysis is presented in the table below.

**Table 1**  
**Step-by-step process of thematic analysis**

Actions	Step
1-1. Transcription (if necessary) 1-2. Repeated reviews 1-3. Writing initial ideas	Getting familiarized with the data
2-1. Coding interesting patterns found throughout the transcript 2-2. Finding and matching data with relevant codes	Initial coding
3-1. Matching codes with potential themes 3-2. Collect all data related to each potential theme	Identifying themes
4-1. Checking the consistency of the themes with the extracted codes 4-2. Examining and matching themes with coded abstracts 4-3. Selecting the basic, organizing, and global themes	Reviewing themes
5-1. Examining the features of each theme 5-2. Defining and naming themes 5-3. Final analysis of extracted themes	Defining and naming themes
6-1. Extracting interesting and prominent instances from coded abstracts 6-2. Final analysis of selected abstracts 6-3. Linking the analysis to research questions and literature 6-4. Writing a scientific report based on the analysis	Producing the report

Source: Authors development

#### 4. Research findings

To identify the components of innovation, the interviewed experts were asked the following question:

“Based on your knowledge and experience, what array of innovation dimensions and indicators would best suit the Iranian Social Security Organization?”

Table 2 shows a list of notable statements made by the experts when answering this question.

**Table 2**  
**Responses of the interviewees to the research question**

Identified codes	Response of the interviewee	Interview code
1- Revolutionizing the education system 2- Providing up-to-date information to employees 3- Expanding the motivation system 4- Encouraging employees to use personal experiences 5- Encouraging employees to try different solutions 6- Encouraging employees to provide creative solutions 7- Encouraging and supporting innovative processes	In my opinion, to have innovation in the organization, first of all, you should transform the organization’s education system and make sure employees are given sufficient up-to-date information. Also, employees need motivation, and so they should be encouraged to use their personal experiences to come up with unique and creative solutions, and these creative processes should be supported.	Interview 1
1- Creating organizational processes for idea creation 2- Establishing links for organizational co-thinking 3- Setting goals for improving processes 4- Modifying work processes 5- Modifying the organizational structure 6- Developing new educational services 7- Recognizing skill deficiencies 8- Conducting specialized interviews to recruit creative employees	My suggestion is to lay a foundation for innovation in the organization. To do that, we would need to create a range of organizational processes and also co-thinking relationships. We would also need to set some goals for improving these processes, and then you should make fundamental changes in the organization’s processes and structure based on those goals. We should also use a new education system and determine the skills that are lacking and also absorb creative professionals accordingly.	Interview 2



<p>1- Conducting specialized interviews to recruit creative employees                  2- Reviewing the qualifications and skills required in the recruitment                  3- Expanding experiential learning                  4- Teaching and facilitating systemic thinking                  5- Training employees to change their mentality</p>	<p>I believe that to have an innovative organization, you have to have creative employees. And to have creative employees, you should take this into account during recruitment. During recruitment, specialized interviews must be conducted to identify and hire creative people. Even before recruitment, the qualifications and skills needed to have an innovative organization must be reviewed. Another important matter is training and learning in the organization, that is, the learning should be less theoretical and more applied. It is also important to have systemic thinking and teach it to employees, and also teach them to change their mentality.</p>	<p>Interview 3</p>
<p>1- Searching for the best way to conduct the organization's affairs                  2- Familiarizing employees with the internal and external needs of customers                  3- Providing a platform for change in the way things are done                  4- Using advanced technology to improve administrative innovation                  5- Creating competitive advantage with technical innovation                  6- Attention to the vision of the organization</p>	<p>I personally think that the organization has to define its vision, to consider the best ways to conduct its affairs, to identify the internal and external needs of its clients, to rigorously train its employees. It should also create a platform for changing how things are done, and use modern technologies to create a competitive advantage through innovation.</p>	<p>Interview 4</p>
<p>1- Imitating nature                  2- Using artificial intelligence                  3- Using advanced technology to improve technical innovation                  4- Fostering technical skills in a specific field                  5- Encouraging employees to provide creative solutions                  6- Encouraging employees to change their behaviors</p>	<p>To build an innovative organization, you must improve innovativeness. This can be done by imitating nature, or using artificial intelligence and other new technologies in the organization, using technical skills in different parts of the organization, and also by encouraging employees to offer innovative solutions or change their behaviors when necessary to fit the organization's circumstances. Naturally,</p>	<p>Interview 5</p>

<p>7- Management support for new work behaviors</p>	<p>managers must also support these new behaviors.</p>	
<p>1- Examining employees' motivation 2- Creating platforms for dialogue and discussion 3- Encouraging employees to try different solutions 4- Enriching the shared information</p>	<p>In my opinion, to have a creative organization, we must use creative people who value the goals of the organization. So it is also necessary to determine the motivation of the employees, to have a platform for discussion and debate, to encourage the employees to participate in decision-making and to ask them to provide creative solutions and share their information and creative solutions with their colleagues and also to make sure that this information is sufficiently rich.</p>	<p>Interview 6</p>
<p>1- Creating organizational processes for idea creation 2- Establishing links for organizational co-thinking 3- Creating platforms for dialogue and discussion</p>	<p>To create an innovative organization, you must work on its intellectual capacity, and to do that, you need to create new organizational processes for producing creative ideas. You must create a way for the employees to think together. Therefore, managers should create the appropriate conditions for more discussions among employees.</p>	<p>Interview 7</p>
<p>1- Searching for the best way to conduct the organization's affairs 2- Encouraging employees to change their behaviors 3- Management support for new work behaviors 4- Fostering technical skills in a specific field 5- Recognizing skill deficiencies</p>	<p>A creative organization will be successful only if it chooses the best way to conduct its operations and encourages its employees to behave in line with its changes. The management must also support such changes, use technical and specialized workforce in areas where they are needed, and identify the skills that the organization lacks and take action to fix the problem.</p>	<p>Interview 8</p>
<p>1- Developing new educational services 2- Modifying the education system 3- Recognizing skill deficiencies 4- Providing up-to-date information to employees 5- Enriching the shared information</p>	<p>Practical training is essential for any organization. Organizations need to use modern educational systems to drastically change how they train their employees. They must identify the skills that their employees need and teach them those skills. They also have to give up-to-date information to their employees and ask them to share their own information and experiences with others.</p>	<p>Interview 9</p>

<p>1- Reviewing the qualifications and skills required in the recruitment                  2- Conducting specialized interviews to recruit creative employees                  3- Attention to the vision of the organization                  4- Examining employees' motivation</p>	<p>Since human resources are quite important for the organization, to have a creative organization, we must change the way human resources are recruited. To do that, we must first determine what specializations and skills we need to build a creative organization and then craft specialized interviews so that people who meet the organization's needs are recruited. We must also define the vision of the organization for new recruits, and consider their motivation for joining the organization.</p>	<p>Interview 10</p>
<p>1- Attention to the vision of the organization                  2- Modifying the organizational structure                  3- Modifying work processes                  4- Setting goals for improving processes                  5- Providing a platform for change in the way things are done                  6- Encouraging employees to change their behaviors</p>	<p>I believe that to have innovation in the organization, first of all, the organization must clearly define its vision. Then, it must change its structure accordingly, and specify the work processes and set specific goals for them. It must create a platform for change in how things are done and encourage its employees to behave according to these changes.</p>	<p>Interview 11</p>
<p>1- Familiarizing employees with the internal and external needs of customers                  2- Expanding experiential learning                  3- Teaching and facilitating systemic thinking                  4- Training employees to change their mentality</p>	<p>To become successful in the field of innovation, the organization must develop a culture of acceptance of change. For this purpose, the organization must make sure that its employees know the internal and external needs of its customers. Employees should also receive practical training rather than theoretical training. Also, systemic thinking could be very important for an organization that wants to be creative, and to achieve this goal, the mentality of employees must also change.</p>	<p>Interview 12</p>
<p>1- Imitating nature                  2- Using artificial intelligence                  3- Expanding the motivation system                  4- Encouraging and supporting innovative processes                  5- Encouraging employees to use personal experiences</p>	<p>In my opinion, an organization can become creative by taking inspiration from nature. But more importantly, it can use new and up-to-date technologies such as artificial intelligence. Considering the crucial role of human resources in the organization, it is vital to motivate them and support the organization's innovation processes and also</p>	<p>Interview 13</p>

<p>6- Encouraging employees to try different solutions                  7- Using advanced technology to improve administrative innovation                  8- Creating competitive advantage with technical innovation</p>	<p>encourage employees to use their own experiences in their organizational decisions and to use creative solutions to achieve organizational goals. In this way, we can create a competitive advantage for the organization.</p>	
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Source: Authors development

To reach a list of major themes in relation to the subject, similar conceptual codes and concepts were categorized as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
**Categorization of organizational innovation components extracted from interviews**

Subthemes	Themes
<p>Creating platforms for dialogue and discussion                      Creating organizational processes for idea creation                      Establishing links for organizational co-thinking</p>	<p>Expanding intellectual capacities</p>
<p>Expanding the motivation system                      Encouraging and supporting innovative processes</p>	<p>Redesigning the motivation system</p>
<p>Developing new educational services                      Revolutionizing the education system                      Recognizing skill deficiencies</p>	<p>Needs assessment and applied training</p>
<p>Providing up-to-date information to employees                      Encouraging employees to use personal experiences                      Encouraging employees to try different solutions                      Enriching the shared information</p>	<p>Creating an infrastructure to facilitate innovation</p>

Setting goals for improving processes	Restructuring to facilitate innovation
Modifying work processes	
Modifying the organizational structure	
Attention to the vision of the organization	Modifying the recruitment system to hire creative personnel
Conducting specialized interviews to recruit creative employees	
Reviewing the qualifications and skills required in the recruitment	
Examining employees' motivation	
Familiarizing employees with the internal and external needs of customers	Nurturing a culture of acceptance of change
Expanding experiential learning	
Teaching and facilitating systemic thinking	
Training employees to change their mentality	
Providing a platform for change in the way things are done	Fostering process-based innovations
Encouraging employees to provide creative solutions	
Searching for the best way to conduct the organization's affairs	
Management support for new work behaviors	Fostering behavioral innovations
Encouraging employees to change their behaviors	
Creating competitive advantage with technical innovation	Fostering administrative innovations
Using advanced technology to improve administrative innovation	
Imitating nature	Fostering technical innovations
Using artificial intelligence	
Fostering technical skills in a specific field	

Source: Authors development

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

The result of the thematic analysis was the identification of 33 subthemes in 11 themes for organizational innovation as follows:

- Expanding intellectual capacities: Creating platforms for dialogue and discussion; Creating organizational processes for idea creation; Establishing links for organizational co-thinking
- Redesigning the motivation system: Expanding the motivation system; Encouraging and supporting innovative processes
- Needs assessment and applied training: Developing new educational services; Revolutionizing the education system; Recognizing skill deficiencies
- Creating an infrastructure to facilitate innovation: Providing up-to-date information to employees; Encouraging employees to use personal experiences; Encouraging employees to try different solutions; Enriching the shared information
- Restructuring to facilitate innovation: Setting goals for improving processes; Modifying work processes; Modifying the organizational structure
- Modifying the recruitment system to hire creative personnel: Attention to the vision of the organization; Conducting specialized interviews to recruit creative employees; Reviewing the qualifications and skills required in recruitment; Examining employees' motivation
- Nurturing a culture of acceptance of change: Familiarizing employees with the internal and external needs of customers; Expanding experiential learning; Teaching and facilitating systemic thinking; Training employees to change their mentality
- Fostering process-based innovations: Providing a platform for change in the way things are done; Encouraging employees to provide creative solutions; Searching for the best way to conduct the organization's affairs
- Fostering behavioral innovations: Management support for new work behaviors; Encouraging employees to change their behaviors
- Fostering administrative innovations: Creating competitive advantage with technical innovation; Using advanced technology to improve administrative innovation
- Fostering technical innovations: Imitating nature; Using artificial intelligence; Fostering technical skills in a specific field

These findings are consistent with the results of Kör and Maden (2013), Marcus et al., (2016), Hedayati et al. (2016), Shoghi and Haj Fathali, (2012), Liao et al. (2008), Liao and Wu, (2010), and Yu et al. (2006).

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