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Regulatory Focus and Employee Creativity: The Role of Individual Participation and Intellectual Stimulation

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The purpose of this study is to examine how regulatory focus, which consists of promotion and prevention, affects individual creativity and how the interaction effect between two contextual factors, intellectual stimulation and individual participation, will strengthen the effect of promotion focus to individual creativity. Employees in a radio station were used as our respondents with total 142 respondents. The authors tested the hypothesis by using hierarchical regression analysis and moderated regression analysis in order to test the moderating effect of intellectual stimulation and individual participation. The results of this study showed that promotion focus is positively related to creativity, whilst prevention focus is negatively related to creativity. Our interesting findings was only intellectual stimulation has a moderate effect on promotion focus and creativity.

Key words: *Regulatory focus, individual participation, intellectual stimulation, creativity.*

Introduction

Indonesia is one of many countries that has good economic performance, especially related to the real sector (creative economy) which deserves to be a priority. Based on the data of the Creative Economy Board and Statistics Centre Board in 2016, it showed that from 2010 to 2015 the gross domestic product in the creative economy sector increased from 525.96 trillion in 2010 to 852.24 trillion in 2015 or increase on average 10.14% per year. There are 16 subsectors that increased rapidly and have great potential to be developed, which are culinary, fashion, handicraft, television and radio, publishing, architecture, application and game developer, advertising, music, photography, performing arts, product design, interior design, fine arts, animation movies and video and visual communication design. From all of



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these subsectors, there are the top five subsectors which highly contributes to the Indonesia GDP: culinary 41.69%, fashion 18.15%, fine arts 15.7%, radio 7.78% and publishing 6.29%.

From 16 developing subsectors, radio is still counted in the top five of the subsectors. It implies that even with the modern technology, radio still becomes a facility that is chosen by societies as an entertainment which focused on music, jokes, interactive stories and news. The content which is served by the radio is considered as innovative so people still need to listen to the radio, especially when they are trapped in a traffic jam.

Scott (1995) argued that a radio station produces creativity, which has to take big steps to push and enhance its creativity. Employee creativity and organisation innovation are gaining attention as research topics since the broadcasting industry is highly dependent on interesting entertainment to gain attention; most radio stations are managed and run by creative employees. Creative employees are considered as a critical factor in each radio station (Scott, 1995).

Surabaya, as the second largest city in Indonesia, has many broadcasting industries. There are 49 radio stations in Surabaya both managed privately or by government. Each of the radio stations has its own segment and attempts to take over a certain segment. Surabaya is one of largest cities which has broad networks in all of East Java.

Based on Nielsen's survey in the third quarter of 2017, the number of radio listeners was 62.3 million people in all of Indonesia. Currently, the radio listeners are dominated by youngsters (56%), and the rest (44%) are adult or elderly people. People tend to consider radio as their best friend which helps them not to feel lonely. The reason underlying why youngsters still listen to the radio is because they enjoy the music, the style of the announcers, the information and the news they get.

The local radio stations try to gain smart, dynamic, and visionary listeners. According to the Nielsen Radio Audience Measurement in the third quarter in 2016, it showed that 57% of listeners were millennials with ages of 18-30 years old. This generation identifies with technology advancement such as social media as well as streaming music applications. Radio stations could survive in such a digital era because they serve creative contents to their listeners, such as quizzes, jokes, information related to certain events and strong story telling.

Scott and Bruce (1994) argued that creativity is an advantage for an organisation's success. Creativity refers to generating new ideas (West and Sacramento, 2012) as a tendency to produce ideas, and alternatives to solving problems (Franken, 1993). Creativity not only generates new ideas but also includes analysing and solving problems (Unsworth, 2001). With regard to the radio stations, each of the employees are demanded to achieve their targets



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whatever the conditions. Every employee also has a different attitude in order to achieve the targets. Drawing from regulatory focus theory, Crowe and Higgins (1997) argued that there are two types of focus, promotion and prevention focus. Zhou, et al (2011) argued that promotion focus is the individual tendency to generate new ideas and try to develop themselves. Whilst promotion focus is to prevent the risk or take the safest way.

Since radio stations are facing high competition, their employees prefer to work in an environment which accommodates their freedom of expression. Tett and Burnett (2003) argued that the traits in each individual will be activated under certain circumstances, which is called the Trait Activation Theory. Trait activation theory explains that a situation has certain effects on different relationships between individuals and their behaviours, a process in which the individual expresses their traits when there is a stimuli from the situation which fit with the traits (Hochwarter, et al., 2006). The role of employees in radio stations are divided into two categories, superiors and subordinates. Employees have certain roles, especially in decision making, whilst their superiors' role is giving stimuli to them in order to create new ideas. Lam, et al (2002) argued that individual participation refers to an employee who perceives an opportunity in the decision-making process, whilst intellectual stimulation refers to how superiors or managers could motivate their subordinates to solve the problem in new ways and develop their employees' abilities (Rafferty dan Griffin, 2004:333).

Based on the trait activation theory (Zhou, et al., 2011), it argued that certain circumstances, such as managers who provides individual participation and intellectual stimulation, are such a way to enhance individual creativity, especially for those with promotion focus. Individual participation gives freedom for the employees as well as opportunities to propose their ideas, but this circumstance does not always end up with high creativity, since the role of employees are determined by the role of their managers in giving them chances to make a decision. Thus, intellectual stimulation involves managers to enhance employee creativity by giving chances to them to make decisions. It implies that intellectual stimulation involves the managers to improve employee creativity with a challenge to develop strategy to promote themselves. Furthermore, the trait activation theory supports the interaction between those circumstances since the complexity of the environment would trigger contextual factors that might interact with each other, which has a different effect on creativity.

This study contributes in several ways. First, this study examines how regulatory focus, which consists of promotion and prevention, affects individual creativity. Second, this study examines how the contextual factor, individual participation and intellectual stimulation moderates the relationship between regulatory focus and creativity. Last but not least, this study examines the three way interaction between those two contextual factors with promotion focus towards creativity



Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

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In the regulatory focus theory there are two focuses, prevention and promotion focus. According to Higgins (1998), the emergence of motivation generated by the promotion focus can increase creativity; specifically, employees with a promotion focus tend to assume that they can overcome the surrounding environment and approach, as a means of pursuing their goals. Employees with a promotion focus can generate new ideas and develop new ways of doing things. The employees tend to take the plunge, and can be held accountable for the right things and can guarantee against his mistakes (Higgins, 1998). When the employees are not reluctant in taking risks, in solving problems and making decisions and focusing on self-development, it will encourage an employees' creative (Zhou, et al., 2011).

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In the context of creativity, Brockner and Higgins (2001) argued that promotion focus is critical to creativity because promotion focus is related to desires and risky work and it has a positive impact on employees who engage in creativity. The existence of the relevant part will later impact on the character of each employee who experiences promotion focus and who is engaged in creativity; it might trigger an employee's desire to express his thoughts to think more openly and creatively. Thus,

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H1: Promotion focus is positively related to creativity.

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Crowe and Higgins (1997, p. 117) argued that employees with prevention focus only consider those who are at risk and can be held accountable for their mistakes. Employees with strong prevention focus see their environment as a challenge and prefer to avoid their goals so this will diminish their creativity. This is when employees are reluctant to take risks or choose to work well; so in other words, the focus of prevention has a negative relationship with creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011). According to Zhou, et al. (2011), there is no interaction effect on prevention focus because there is still a lack of theories that support interactions related to creativity. Because of the tendency to fulfill duties and obligations, employees who have prevention focus are usually taking orders and respond to stimuli that indicate making a mistake or not achieving one's goals. Thus, individual participation and intellectual stimulation may not require a focus of prevention, thereby affecting creativity. Thus,

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H2: Prevention focus is negatively related to *creativity*.

Tett and Burnett (2011) argued that the trait activation theory explains how employees have different tendencies with regard to expressing the characteristics which underlie their personality when dealing with certain circumstances or situations. When employees want to take risks that involve themselves or participate in decision making, it will enhance their creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011).



Individual participation refers to the individuals who engage in the decision-making process (Lam, et al., 2002). If employees have high level of participation, their superiors will trust them to contribute in decision-making, as a part of the superior's policy, so employees will be more able determine how to do their tasks or jobs (Arnold, et al., 2000). Furthermore, participation does not always suggest a set of practices but rather reduces structural barriers which may be experienced in the workplace. Employees have chances to involve, not necessarily get assistance in order to solve their problems (Zhou, et al., 2011). Individual participation will have a varied effect according to the extent to which employees are able to increase their encouragement through new ways of working (Ahearne, et al., 2005). Employees with promotion focus will be more interested in being involved or participating to achieve their desired goals, to give them chances in exploring their triumph and achievement and experiment to find a new solution (Friedman dan Förster, 2001). When the employees are involved and participating to achieve their goals and explore new things to find innovative solution, it will strengthen the effect of promotion focus to creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011). Thus,

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H3: Individual participation moderates the relationship between promotion focus and creativity

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According to Tett and Burnett (2011), the trait activation theory explains the process by which individuals express their nature when there is a stimulus from the environment that matches their nature (Hochwarter, et al., 2006). In some situations, managers provide greater scope or eliminate barriers that limit the individual in expressing relevant behaviours, while other situations can facilitate and encourage individuals to express traits, or make information about individual traits more prominent. Individuals express their behaviour more when given attention to inhibit the disclosure of a trait (Tett and Burnett, 2011).

According to Zhou, et al., (2011), when a manager engages the employees in problem solving activities, they can increase the creativity. Intellectual stimulation includes manager behaviour that can motivate employees to solve problems, develop employee capabilities, and to solve problems in new ways (Rafferty and Griffin, 2004: 333). Intellectual stimulation provided by managers is a condition that can encourage employees to explore new methods and solve problems through innovative approaches (Rafferty and Griffin, 2004). When managers help employees to be involved in activities that solve a problem, this can support the challenges of these employees in considering different approaches, which will improve the problem-solving ability of employees (Scholl, 1999).

With intellectual stimulation, managers will expand their skills, develop their ability to solve problems, maintain employee growth and achievement in the workplace. In addition,



intellectual stimulation supports open applications and ways to think of strategies to achieve goals. Thus a high level of intellectual stimulation will encourage employees to face challenges and problems (Ahearne et al., 2005) by offering creative ideas to improve products / services. The activity influences motivation on individual promotion focus which will provide challenges in their skills, so that it will encourage individual creativity (Zhou et al., 2011). Thus,

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H4: Intellectual stimulation moderates the relationship between promotion focus and creativity.

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In the regulatory focus theory there are two focuses, namely prevention focus and promotion focus. In this theory promotion focus can increase creativity supported by the trait activation theory which is moderated by a combination of intellectual stimulation and individual participation. According to Zhou, et al. (2011) intellectual stimulation and individual participation together can moderate the relationship between promotion focus and creativity. Tett and Burnett (2003) argued that there are 4 perspectives in the trait activation theory. First, individuals who are motivated to move forward and adapt. Second, the personality of an individual who sees himself (identity; from within) as different from the personality seen by others (reputation; from outside). Third, the effect of an individual's personality on performance is moderated by his social abilities. Last, performance evaluation is a key role.

This study focuses on the second point, which explains the individual's personality, which is divided into two, namely from inside and from outside. Individuals with promotion focus tend to have a personality from the inside, which is an identity, where the individual is not afraid of the risks to be faced. While individuals who have prevention focus tend to have more personality from the outside, and they are more inclined to consider reputation. Individuals who tend to focus on how they want to be seen and not seen, are afraid of failing to innovate, so they choose not to innovate. These individuals tend not to want to be involved in things that smell creative and innovative, because the reputation of individuals whose prevention focus is at stake (Tett and Burnett, 2003).

In any situation, even if the employer provides stimulation and the individual adapts, with any treatment, individuals with a tendency to prevention focus will remain individuals who with a prevention focus; it is impossible to turn into individuals who are promotional focus, because prevention individuals prefer to be ordinary, and getting a label that fails to innovate. Therefore, in this study, we only hypothesised intellectual stimulation and individual participation in the promotion of focus on creativity (Tett and Burnett, 2003). Shalley, et al. (2004) argued that the emergence of a combination effect due to a complex work environment; this can trigger the existence of contextual factors that can interact with each other, which have different impacts on creativity. Job characteristics, work arrangements, and



relationships with co-workers and superiors are considered as contextual factors. Contextual factors have aspects of control. When aspects of control are more prominent, individuals feel that thoughts, feelings, or actions are limited by these contextual factors and feel that individuals no longer originate from individual thoughts or actions (Shalley, et al., 2004). If only using one variable is not strong enough to encourage individual creativity, there are still other supporting variables, which can be felt to affect the relationship. So, when there is a combination effect, it can mutually strengthen the relationship between variables with each other so that it can bring about a strong relationship to creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011).

Shalley, et al. (2004) argued that the complexity of the work environment that leads to different impacts on employee creativity, will lead to a combination of the two moderation variables that interact with each other. Intellectual stimulation basically will encourage individuals to express an appreciation with new ways of working. This makes the integration with the orientation of individuals who have a promotion focus on experimentation and exploration. Conversely, individual participation will bring out something bigger, but unlike intellectual stimulation which is less encouraging specific behaviour. Therefore, individuals who focus on promotion focus will find things that are appropriate in a creative way, if moderated by individual participation and intellectual stimulation. In such situations, managers will encourage employees in different ways, which is to provide greater opportunities to think creatively in their behaviour. Thus,

H5: Intellectual stimulation and individual participation moderates the relationship between promotion focus and creativity.

Methods

Respondents in this study were creative teams at nine Radio Stations that segmented youngsters in Surabaya, namely EBS FM, M Radio, Hard Rock FM, Merdeka FM, GEN FM, Pambors Surabaya, Jeje FM, DJ FM, Colors Radio. Because the listeners of the nine radio station companies are dominated by youngsters, so the employees of the radio station are also dominated by young people. In this study the author used an online survey for 3 months by using Google forms. During this time period a total of 158 respondents were obtained, but the amount of data that can be processed was 142. Most of the respondents in this study were men, 53%, the rest were 47% women. The average age of respondents was 26 years. While the average working period of respondents was 2.72 years or equivalent to 2 years 10 months. There are several analytical techniques in this study: First, by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test data quality or data validity, second, by using multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses 1 and 2, then to test hypothesis 3 to hypothesis 5 by using a moderated regression analysis. This study uses a 5 point Likert scale, 1 to strongly disagree and 5 to strongly agree. Promotion focus is measured by adapting 10 measurement items



from Lockwood, et al. (2002) ($\alpha = 0.845$). Prevention focus was measured by adapting 8 measurement items from Lockwood, et al. (2002) ($\alpha = 0.879$). Then for individual participation adapted 4 items from Lam et al. (2002) ($\alpha = 0.853$). Intellectual stimulation adapted 3 items from Rafferty and Griffin (2004) ($\alpha = 0.810$). For creativity using 9 measurement items from Tierney et al. (1999) ($\alpha = 0.851$)

Results and Discussions

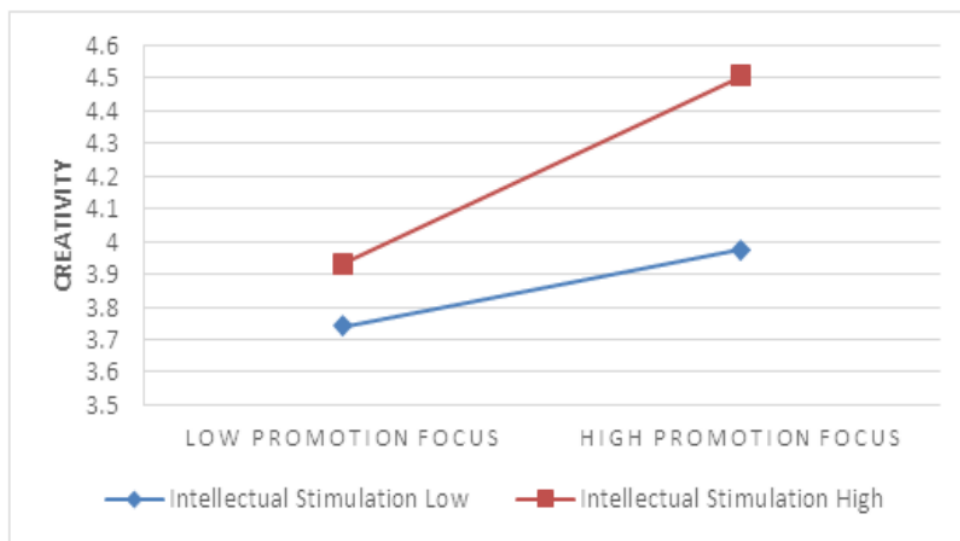
In testing hypotheses 1 and 2 using multiple regression, promotion and prevention focus on creativity was tested. Regression test results showed that the promotion focus had an influence of 0.417 with a significance of $p < 0.05$. This shows that hypothesis 1 was supported. Then for the second hypothesis, the value of prevention focus on creativity shows an effect of -0.096 with a significance of $p < 0.05$. This shows that hypothesis 2 was supported. The third to fifth hypotheses, used a moderation regression test by interacting independent variables with moderation variables. The third hypothesis is not supported because individual participation has a value of -0.154 with $p > 0.05$. Intellectual stimulation variable proved to moderate the relationship between promotion focus on creativity by 0.201 with $p < 0.05$. This indicates that hypothesis 4 was supported. The interaction between intellectual stimulation and individual participation proved to have no moderation effect in strengthening or weakening the relationship between promotion focus on creativity with $p > 0.05$. Therefore hypothesis 5 was not supported.

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The author, further examined the moderating effects of intellectual stimulation and promotion focus on creativity. In interpreting the interaction effect between promotion focus and intellectual stimulation, we use the equation for the relationship between promotion focus and creativity at high and low levels of intellectual stimulation. There are several methods for conducting interaction tests, one of which uses the model from Cohen & Cohen (1983) by translating the high and low categories as +1 and - 1 Standard Deviation from the average value of the variable. Figure 1 shows that the relationship between promotion focus and creativity is strengthened by the presence of intellectual stimulation. The relationship between promotion focus and creativity is stronger when intellectual stimulation is at a high level ($\beta = 0.527$, $t = 3.889$, $p < 0.01$) compared to a low level ($\beta = 0.0928$, $t = 2.30$, $p < 0.05$). According to Friedman and Forster (2001), promotion focus has shown that there is a positive impact on creativity. In addition, as previously explained, promotion focus has a positive impact on employee creativity. Then it was clarified and deepened again by Brockner and Higgins (2001), when employees with promotion focus seek or want to fulfill the desires of development and growth. Employees are motivated to meet the goals that present themselves. From this explanation it can be interpreted that promotion focus can lead to the emergence of individual motivation so that the individual can fulfill his goals. In the context of creativity, Brockner and Higgins (2001) explain that promotion focus is a relevant part of creativity



because promotion focus is related to desires and work that is at risk and it has a positive impact on individuals engaged in creativity. The existence of the relevant section will later impact the character of each individual with a promotion focus and which is engaged in creativity; it can trigger an individual's desire to pour his thoughts to think more openly and creatively. When the individual likes challenges and is brave in taking risks, in solving problems, making decisions and focusing on making himself develop, it will encourage an individual's creative competence. So it has a positive relationship (Zhou, et al., 2011).

Figure 1. Simple slope analysis for the interaction effect between promotion focus and intellectual stimulation to creativity



10 Crowe and Higgins (1997) argued that employees with prevention focus tend to only follow risky approaches and can take responsibility for mistakes and see the environment as a threat and prefer to avoid goals so as to reduce creativity. Higgins (2011) argued that employees with prevention focus tend to fulfill duties and obligations, follow the orders, and be responsive to encouragement that can lead to mistakes and not achieving one's goals. Thus, prevention focus is not likely to encourage and influence creativity. When the individual does not dare to take risks or choose to be safe and does not want himself to develop, it will not encourage the creativity competencies that the individual has; so in other words prevention focus has a negative relationship (Zhou, et al., 2011).

5 An interesting result in this study is that individual participation does not moderate the relationship between promotion focus and creativity. Although these individuals participate in corporate decision making, it does not strengthen the relationship between promotion focus



and creativity. According to Lam et al. (2002), individual participation refers to individuals involved in the decision making process. If the employee has high participation, the manager will give confidence to the employee to contribute to decision-making, as a power to encourage a policy, so that employees will be better able to determine how things should be regulated and done to provide freedom of expression to different individuals (Arnold, et al., 2000; Scholl, 1999). In the context of the moderating relationship between promotion focus and creativity, with individual participation, the individual participates in achieving goals and always explores successes and achievements, then looks for innovative solutions so there is an influence between promotion focus and creativity. Thus, if individual participation moderates it will strengthen the influence between promotion focus and creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011).

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According to Noe and Wilk (1993), the characteristics of organisational membership such as position, tenure, and organisational mastery are proposed to have a direct influence on employee opportunities to participate in organisational development activities. So the length of work and position affect the opportunity for employees to participate in company development activities. According to Kooij, et al. (2014), individuals who worked less than 3 years are not given greater opportunities because they are still considered not to have enough time in maximum performance. The results of the study explained that employees who worked for an average of 2 years 10 months were not given a greater opportunity because of the lack of work tenure, so that the employer still had not entrusted the employee in the decision-making process more than those who had longer tenure. In addition, supported by the characteristics of respondents based on their position, the highest number or majority of respondents based on their position i.e. the announcer, is 94% strengthened by asking the announcer directly, that the broadcaster is limited to giving their participation by giving ideas and innovations in developing program content; but the decision remains with the manager. So it only participates by giving new ideas but decision making remains with superiors, reinforcing the assumption that there is no moderation of individual participation. According to Zhou et al. (2011), employees do not have a strong influence in every company decision. So employees are limited to participating in channelling ideas and opinions, but do not participate in corporate decision-making. However, it can open up opportunities for employee involvement in general management issues (Zhou et al., 2011).

Another interesting finding is that intellectual stimulation and individual participation together do not moderate the relationship between promotion focus and creativity. Although, these individuals participate in corporate decision-making and managers can motivate employees to solve problems, neither of these strengthens the relationship between promotion focus and creativity. According to Shalley et al. (2004), the complexity of the work environment that leads to different effects on employee creativity, will lead to a combination of the two moderation variables that interact with each other. Intellectual stimulation



basically will encourage individuals to express an appreciation with new ways of working. This makes the integration with the orientation of individuals who have a promotion focus on experimentation and exploration. Conversely, individual participation will bring out something bigger, unlike intellectual stimulation which is less encouraging of specific behaviour. In such situations, managers will encourage employees in different ways, which is to provide greater opportunities to think creatively in their behaviour. If only using one variable is not strong enough to encourage individual creativity, there are still other variables that support, which is felt to affect the relationship. So, when there is a combination effect, it can mutually strengthen the relationship between variables with each other so that it can bring about a strong relationship to creativity (Zhou, et al., 2011).

Limitations

Future studies are expected to be able to examine from the perspective of superiors that are applied to radio stations, to provide accurate and comprehensive results. This research sample only focuses on taking the point of view of employees who work at the radio station and not taking the perspective of the leadership system that is applied at the radio station. In fact, in the main reference used, the researcher also took the perspective of leadership with creativity. This study only looks at the employee's side; further research would be better if examining superiors to see aspects of the role of superiors on employee performance and strengthen research results.

Table 1: Regression results with Creativity as the Dependent Variable

Predictor Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	β	β	β	β
Prom	0.417*	0.914**	-0.4	0.031
Prev	-0.096**	-	-	-
IP	-	1.043**	-	1.288
IS	-	-	-0.64*	.0390
Prom x IP	-	-0.154	-	1.775
Prom x IS	-	-	0.201**	-0.103
IS x IP	-	-	-	0.004
Prom x IP x IS	-	-	-	0.013
F	15.788*	17.992*	27.556*	13.855*
R ²	0.185	0.281	0.375	0.420

Prom (*Promotion Focus*), Prev (*Prevention Focus*), IP (*Individual Participation*), IS (*Intellectual Stimulation*), *p<0.01; **p<0.05



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