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**THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY  
ON INDIVIDUAL IMPROVISATION: REFLECTION IN CHINA**



**Thesis Submitted to Othman Yoep Abdullah Graduate School of Business**

**Universiti Utara Malaysia**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master in Science**



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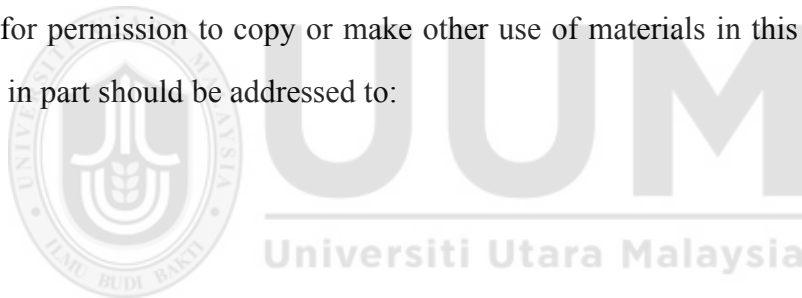
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## ABSTRACT

This research is aimed to examine the relationships between empowering leadership and psychological availability on individual improvisation in China. A total of 530 questionnaires were distributed to the employees working at Tencent Co. and only 325 employees are responded, which yield a response rate of 61.3%. All data has been analyzed by using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23. The findings showed that both empowering leadership and psychological availability are positively related to individual improvisation. This indicated that when top management empower the employees by giving more flexibility and freedom it can enhance the improvisation of employees. Further, psychological availability can indeed affect improvisation behaviors by improve the psychological perception of employees. Hence, leader manager at organizations or small and medium-sized enterprises can appropriately delegate power to employees appropriately and care about employee's psychological availability, without affecting work efficiency and management.

**Keywords:** Empowering Leadership, Individual Improvisation, Psychological Availability, Tencent Co.

## ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara memperkasakan kepimpinan dan ketersediaan psikologi terhadap improvisasi individu di China. Sebanyak 530 soal selidik telah diedarkan kepada pekerja di Tencent Co. melalui cara kaji selidik dalam talian dan hanya 325 pekerja telah bertindak balas terhadap soal selidik dan menghasilkan kadar respons sebanyak 61.3%. Semua data telah dianalisis dengan pakej statistik untuk sains sosial (SPSS) versi 23. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua memperkasakan kepimpinan dan ketersediaan psikologi adalah positif berkaitan dengan peningkatan individu. Hal ini menunjukkan improvisasi pekerja dapat ditingkatkan apabila pihak atasan memperkasakan pekerja kelenturan dan kebebasan yang lebih banyak. Di samping itu, ketersediaan psikologi juga akan menjejaskan improvisasi tingkah laku dengan meningkatkan persepsi psikologi pekerja. Jadi, pengurus dalam organisasi ataupun pengurusan kecil dan sederhana boleh memperkasakan kuasa yang bersesuaian kepada pekerja dan prihatin terhadap ketersediaan psikologi pekerja tanpa menjejaskan kecekapan dan pengurusan pekerjaan mereka

**Kata kunci:** memperkasakan kepimpinan, improvisasi individu, ketersediaan psikologi, Tencent Co.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Jennie Soo Hooi Sin for his continuous teaching and support. I have developed a strong interest in the discipline of organizational behavior from the very beginning when I learned subject organizational behavior from Dr. Jennie. She also led me to explore and grow in this research field. During my postgraduate period, I had the honor to follow my tutor to do research, and she gave me patient and professional guidance. Besides, I was deeply inspired by her humorous and humorous personality as well as her strict academic spirit.

At the same time, I would also like to thank lecturers in Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School Of Business school (OYAGSB) for their good advice and profound knowledge that pushed me to make continuous progress. Here I would like to thanks my research methodology lecturer Dr. Fareed, he also gave me a lot of help and support during my thesis writing. Second thanks to my roommates and my classmates for helping me in selected topic, data analysis, we discussed, studied, explored together, we help each other. At the same time, I would like to thank my friends working in Tencent for their help in the data collection of my thesis.

At the end, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the people who have helped me. Without their help, I could not have finished my research so smoothly.

Thank you,

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Descriptions of Abbreviation</b>
H	Hypothesis
II	Individual Improvisation
EL	Empowering Leadership
PA	Psychological Availability
S	Sample Size
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the study background as well as the problem statement, research problem, research objective and research significance. In addition, a brief definition of some key words in this study will be given at the end.

### 1.2 Background of the study

As the economic competition intensifies, the external environment is complicated and changeful, this not only for the enterprise to bring the development opportunity, also means that will face the huge threats and challenges, hope to maintain the survival and development must rely on innovation activities (Karin et al., 2010). However, innovation activities are complex, difficult to clearly define, and unconventional, so it is difficult to achieve by only by relying on the power of leaders, and employees should be actively involved in innovation work. However, at present, China is in economic transition period, the organization structure and company internal system varied in order to suit the environment change. Therefore, in this situation employees may face uncertain job risk at any time, such as layoffs, discharge and shunt (Zhang & Li, 2013). The invisible risk increased employees sense of insecurity, distracted the

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## APPENDIX I Questionnaire

### Section A - Demographic Information

*Instruction:* Please choose one answer for each question by tick (✓) the chosen answers.

1. Age:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20 years old and below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 21-25 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 26-30 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 31-35 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 36-40 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 41-45 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 46-50 years old        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 51 years old and above |

2. Gender

- Male       Female

3. Marital Status:

- Single       Married

4. Highest Education level

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Secondary School Certificate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Diploma                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | First Degree                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Master Degree                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Doctor of Philosophy         |

5. Work Experience

- |                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 1 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1-5 years        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6-10 years       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11-20 years      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20 years above   |

6. Size of your Work Team

- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1-5 person      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6-10 person     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11-15 person    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 16-20 person    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 21 person above |

7. Department you work for:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Administrative Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	HR Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	System Integration Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Product Technology Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Property Management Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Settlement Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspection and Test Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Logistics Department
<input type="checkbox"/>	Security Department



## Section B - Individual Improvisation

**Instruction:** Please read the question follow, and choose one answer for each question by tick (✓) the chosen answers.

- 1= STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
- 2= DISAGREE (D)
- 3= SOMEWAHT DISAGREE (SWD)
- 4= NEITHER AGREE NORE DISAGREE (N)
- 5= SOMEWHAT AGREE (SWA)
- 6= AGREE (A)
- 7= STRONGLY AGREE (SA)

No.		SD	D	S W D	N	S W A	A	SA
1.	I'm able to deal with unanticipated events on the spot during my work.							
2.	I'm able to think on my feet when carrying out actions during my work.							
3.	I'm able to respond in the moment to unexpected problems during my work.							
4.	I'm able to try new approaches to problems during my work.							
5.	I'm able to identify opportunities for new solutions during my work.							
6.	I'm able to take risk in terms of producing new ideas in doing my work.							
7.	I'm able to demonstrate originality accomplishing my tasks during the work.							

Source from: Vera and Crossan (2005)

### Section C- EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

**Instruction:** Please read the question follow, and choose one answer for each question by tick (√) the chosen answers.

- 1= STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
- 2= DISAGREE (D)
- 3= SOMEWAHT DISAGREE (SWD)
- 4= NEITHER AGREE NORE DISAGREE (N)
- 5= SOMEWHAT AGREE (SWA)
- 6= AGREE (A)
- 7= STRONGLY AGREE (SA)

No.		SD	D	S W D	N	S W A	A	SA
1.	My manager helps me understand how my objectives and goals relate to company							
2.	My manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company.							
3.	My manager helps me understand how my job fits into the bigger picture.							
4.	My manager makes many decision together with me during my job.							
5.	My manager often consults me on strategic decisions during my job.							
6.	My manager solicits my opinion on decisions that may affect me during my job.							
7.	My manager believes that I can handle demanding tasks during my job.							
8.	My manager believes in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes during my job.							
9.	My manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level during my							

	job.							
10.	My manager allows me to do my way during my job.							
11.	My manager makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple.							
12.	My manager allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy customer needs during my job.							

*Source from: Ahearne, Matieu and Rapp (2005)*



**Section D- PSYCHOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY**

**Instruction:** Please read the question follow, and choose one answer for each question by tick (√) the chosen answers.

- 1= STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
- 2= DISAGREE (D)
- 3= SOMEWAHT DISAGREE (SWD)
- 4= NEITHER AGREE NORE DISAGREE (N)
- 5= SOMEWHAT AGREE (SWA)
- 6= AGREE (A)
- 7= STRONGLY AGREE (SA)

No.		SD	D	S W D	N	S W A	A	SA
1.	I'm confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work.							
2.	I'm confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work.							
3.	I'm confident in my ability to think clearly at work.							
4.	I'm confident in my ability to display the appropriate emotions at work.							

Source from: May, Gilson adn Harter (2004)

## APPENDIX II: SPSS Raw Data

### Frequency Test

Statistics							
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation
A1	301	5	2	7	3.79	1.819	1.349
A2	301	1	1	2	1.47	.500	.500
A3	301	1	1	2	1.50	.501	.501
A4	301	3	2	5	3.19	.859	.859
A5	301	4	1	5	2.35	.942	.942
A6	301	4	1	5	2.64	1.266	1.266
A7	301	10	1	11	4.71	2.808	2.808

### Descriptive Test

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Individual Improvisation	301	5.43	1.57	7.00	5.7551	.79631	.634
Empowering Leadership	301	5.25	1.75	7.00	5.8583	.64920	.421
Psychological Availability	301	5.50	1.50	7.00	5.7899	.80394	.646
Valid N (listwise)	301						

### Reliability Test II

Reliability Statistics	
Alpha	N of Items
.772	7

## Reliability Test EL

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.801	12

## Reliability Test PA

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.613	4

## Correlation Test

Correlations All Variables				
Variable		II	EL	PA
Individual Improvisation (II)	Pearson Correlation	1	.729**	.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	301	301	301
Empowering Leadership (EL)	Pearson Correlation	.729**	1	.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	301	301	301
Psychological Availability (PA)	Pearson Correlation	.648**	.643**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	301	301	301

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## Multiple Liner Regression Test

Variables Entered/Removed			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Psychological Availability, Empowering Leadership.	.	Enter

- a. Dependent Variable: Individual Improvisation  
 b. All requested variables entered.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.766 <sup>a</sup>	.587	.584	.51368

a. Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Availability, Empowering Leadership

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	111.600	2	55.800	211.469	.000b
	Residual	78.633	298	.264		
	Total	190.233	300			

a. Dependent Variable: Individual Improvisation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Availability, Empowering Leadership

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	.175	.275		.637	.525
	Empowering Leadership	.653	.060	.532	10.943	.000
	Psychological Availability	.303	.048	.306	6.288	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Individual Improvisation