Investigating the role organizational culture plays in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility: antecedent or mediator?

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MBA – Human resources

at Dublin Business School

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May 2022

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation that I have submitted to Dublin Business School for the award of MBA – Human Resources is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated, where it is clearly acknowledged by references. Furthermore, this work has not been submitted for any other degree.

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Acknowledgment

I would like to give my warmest appreciation to my supervisor Deaglan Page for his attention and patience during the written process. This thesis would have been harder without his assistance.

I would also like to thank my partner and my family (even far away) for their support and encouragement.

At the same time, I would like to thank myself for having believed in my potential and for having exceeded my own expectations. It was a difficult period, but mission was accomplished at last. I have never imagined I would do masters in a different country, in language and I did it.

Abstract

Globalization, increased political uncertainty and unforeseen economic instability, have forced corporations to reinvent themselves. They need to develop an agile workforce to handle and adapt to unforeseen changes, and organizational culture is an important element for the success of a company. Yet, organizational culture has not been fully explored with work-related curiosity and workforce agility. The aim is to determine whether organizational culture promotes work-related curiosity and, consequently, workforce agility. This study found that there is no direct relationship between organizational culture and workforce agility, and that organization culture does not act as a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. It was also found that organization culture does not have a straight relationship with work-related curiosity, but it is a strong predictor of it. Using mixed methods design combining a correlational and a between groups designs, with data collected from 62 participants based in Brazil and Ireland, all the hypotheses were tested. The findings add value to the existing literature on the three constructs, helping companies find a way to improve the performance of the workforce.

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1. Introduction

Maintaining competitiveness is one of the current challenges in an era of digital transformation. In recent times, following major events like the COVID-19 pandemic ad the Ukraine-Russia crisis, our society has witnessed significant changes and experienced increasing unpredictability of the daily life. Organizations have begun to realize the significant shift in mindset of professional all over the world and have been forced to rethink their approach to business to remain competitive in such challenging times.

Therefore, in order to survive in an unsteady world and perform successfully, companies are changing their structure and strategy rapidly (Eisenhardt and Sull, 2001). One of the most prominent ways to handle unpredictable situations is to introduce the principle of agility and drive towards an agile organization (Sherehiy and Karwowski, 2014). Agility helps companies to adapt and respond to a dynamic and rapid environment (Muduli and Pandaya, 2018). An agile organization presents capabilities to adapt to unexpected changes in the environment (Vinodh et al. 2012a; Walter, 2021) and needs the creation of a workforce that can respond to the environmental changes (Sherehiy, Karwowski, 2014).

Agile workforce is deemed to be essential for agility (Alavi et al., 2014) because an agile workforce helps the company to be more responsive and active, and this type of workforce can be described as proactive, resilient in the face of unforeseen circumstances, flexible, and adaptable, showing the potential to influence and even change a company's atmosphere (Sherehiy, 2008). As Goldman and Nagel (1995) noted, workforce agility is of great significance to a successful agile company. Be that as it may, workforce agility has not been given the proper attention (Chonko and Jones 2005), causing problems to leaders and managers who are not aware of the skills required to build, establish, and assist the workforce (Alavi and Wahab, 2013).

Curiosity is thought to be the starting point of the desire to learn, and an agile behavior is considered easy to be acquired when the worker is curious. People who are curious, according to Huang (2021), are thirsty for information and are more likely to tackle complex problems and ask difficult and important questions, rather than just merely getting things done at work. Silvia (2008) further argues that curiosity is the emotion of interest that happens when there is a new event, a complex or an uncertain situation to the individual.

Since curiosity instigates people to research what is novel and difficult, it can also be seen as an important determinant of workforce agility. According to Kashdan and Silvia (2009), people are motivated by curiosity; therefore, they learn new things and develop talents. Furthermore, people who are curious naturally take pleasure in the process of discovery, learning and thinking. (Çelik, Storme, Davila, and Myszkowski, 2016; Mussel, 2010).

Work-related curiosity is a concept firstly introduced by Mussel et al. (2012). The author created and validated a scale to assess curiosity and its relevance in the workplace. According to him, curiosity has aspects (looking for information, gaining knowledge, learning and thinking) deemed to be of importance in the world of work. In addition to this, Müceldili et al. (2020) state that work-related curiosity can be beneficial to employees as it contributes to motivation, cognition, and behaviour.

Çelik et al. (2016) argue that employees with high levels of curiosity related to work show more openness to new ideas; thus, they are more proactive when it comes to adjusting changes. Being open to changes can be an important component of workforce agility, and agility can be increased by curiosity related to work (Plonka, 1997; Muduli, 2009). For instance, Gino (2018) found out that improvements at work happen when employees are motivated to be curious. According to her research, 92% of the employees interviewed said that curiosity is important to come up with new ideas and it has effects on motivation, job satisfaction, innovation, and high performance.

In relation to corporate culture, it is necessary to understand that culture represents the principles (Carvalho et al., 2019; Trice and Beyer, 1993) and the base of a company (Tang and Kim, 2000). Therefore, culture holds the company together and it is something that defines the group, making it difficult to modify since individuals regard it as vital and useful for consistency, stability, predictability and meaning (Schein, 2004).

Employees' personal and professional objectives, as well as their performance and effort to attain them, may be influenced by organizational culture, according to Lok and Crawford (2004). Culture influences and determines how employees perceive and react to the company's environment and their surroundings (Schein, 2004).

The aim of this study is to determine whether organizational culture has an impact on encouraging curiosity and, consequently, workforce agility, if it plays the role of a mediator in this relationship or if there is no influence whatsoever. Since the sense of curiosity can foster the employee's interest in what is novel, making them attracted to new knowledge (Müceldili, 2020), and curiosity is a natural internal motivator (Oudeyer and Kaplan, 2007), organizations should leverage it. Organizations should also put forward their fundamental values and motivate employees to recognize and follow them (Ghasemi et al., 2017). Tessarini and Saltorato (2021) argue that if the quality of communication improves, along with information sharing, it is possible to promote an agile workforce.

Until now, however, the relationship between workforce agility and work-related curiosity, along with organizational culture has not been fully understood and investigated, with many organizations often overlooking these potential key aspects.

Even though there has been research investigating the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility, there is no investigation regarding this relationship along with organizational culture as as an antecedent or as a mediator. It would be important to fil the gap in the theoretical knowledge and check thoroughly into the role of organizational culture because it is important to allow employees to use their curiosity and ask questions that are related to work (Müceldili et al, 2020). This could promote workforce agility as a result. Moreover, It is important to investigate the role of organizational culture because if it encourages curiosity and agility, organizations can restructure their organizational elements to create an agile workforce.

2. Literature review

2.1 Curiosity and Work-related curiosity

Over the years, many studies concerning curiosity have been carried out and a myriad of definitions have been developed by psychologists. Curiosity could be defined as the thirst to know and/or learn about something, drawing attention to unknown events and leading to discovery. In the field of psychology, it has been been deeply investigated and some researchers as Loewenstein (1994) argue that curiosity arises when the gap in knowledge and understanding

is perceived. Based on this idea, curiosity is the interest towards seeking for new knowledge/information when there is cognitive deprivation.

Dewey (1910) stated that the curious minds are always alert and exploring, with strong desire for what is new, and this curiosity is the only assurance of "acquisition of the primary facts upon which inference must base itself". He then presented three different types of curiosity: physical, social and intellectual. The physical curiosity could be seen as a physiological necessity related to animals and children that explore and test things randomly, with no particular objective. This kind of curiosity is important to intellectual activity.

The social type that Dewey (1910) defends is triggered by social stimuli. The frequent questions that children ask ("Why?", "What is that?") are not necessarily connected rationally, depicting just the eagerness to understand what surrounds them. Lastly, intellectual curiosity occurs when curiosity turns into interest in solving problems as well as gathering knowledge.

Berlyne (1960), in turn, proposed that curiosity is a motivational antecedent of exploratory behavior, introducing two distinguished types of curiosity: perceptual and epistemic. The former involves novelty and "exposure to appropriate stimuli", whereas the latter refers to inquiries about something, seeking for knowledge. In a more contemporary perspective of curiosity, Litman and Spielberger (2003) complement Dewey's intellectual curiosity theory when they define curiosity as the desire to obtain new knowledge, inciting exploratory behavior.

Kashdan et al. (2004) suggests that curiosity can be self-generated because it is influenced by inner and outer creativity as well as challenges. Litman (2005) then adds that employees who show interest in problem-solving information present high level of curiosity. As far as curiosity goes, all theories end up linking curiosity with a state of motivation and exploration.

In 2009, Kashdan and Silvia defended the idea that curiosity has to do with the will to explore new, unusual, difficult, and unforeseen situations. Under these circumstances, people are forced to think in different ways, then investigate and learn about what piqued their curiosity. Curious people can adjust to changes, new scenarios as well as manage crises more easily, with a tendency to come up with new ideas (Çelik et al., 2016). Therefore, curiosity is essential to an employee with innovative ideas (Huang, 2021).

As mentioned previously, work-related curiosity is a recent construct that was introduced by Mussel et al. in 2012. According to him, work-related curiosity is a unidimensional construct, and it is based upon the epistemic curiosity (the desire for knowledge). He noticed that, despite being important in life, curiosity had never been explored in work settings. In his research (2012), the author stated that, due to changes in the world, advance of technology, globalisation and so on, curiosity is deemed to be fundamental and its relevance in the world of work will only increase in the future.

The epistemic form of curiosity has influence on information-seeking behavior because, when people show high level of curiosity in working settings, they look for new pieces of information and knowledge. This helps employees recognize problems related to work and then find a solution (Hardy III et al., 2017; Huang, 2021). Curious people tend to look for ideas and answers in advance, right before it becomes a crisis. This happens given the fact that they are intrinsically motivated to obtain new knowledge and understanding (Kashdan et al., 2004).

Curiosity may help in both adapting to a changing environment and having a proactive conduct (Mussel, 2013), because, when employees are motivated and curious, they easily detect and react to changes (Storme et al., 2020). Results from Mussel`s research (2012), for instance, showed that curiosity "has high predictive validity for task performance". The author, also in 2012, declares that work-related curiosity is fundamental when it comes to having desire to learn information in relation to work, gain new skills and find out a solution when the company experiences a setback. Curiosity motivates towards the will to acquire information and answer complicated and difficult questions as well as resole an issue (Litman and Silvia, 2006).

Mussel et al. (2012) conceptualizes work-related curiosity as an epistemic unidimensional variable. On the other hand, Kashdan et al. (2018) argue that work-related curiosity is a multidimensional variable with four dimensions: joyous exploration (people have pleasure in exploring and learning), deprivation sensitivity (employees seek for information until the problems related to work are resolved), stress tolerance (ability to cope with uncertainty, new situations and discomfort at work) and openness to people's ideas (listening to and valuing other people's different point of views). This study, however, works with Mussel's point of view of work-related curiosity, which is based on epistemic curiosity.

A curious person presents internal motivation and easily deals with adaptive performance (Kashdan et al., 2015), and curiosity related to work has to do with employee's internal motivation, coming from self-determination theory (Müceldili et al., 2020). According to this theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000), the innate psychological needs (competence, relatedness, and autonomy) – depending on the level of satisfaction of these needs – can have impact on performance and work engagement. This happens because, when people fulfill their curiosity, they develop the feeling of "internal reward", which increases their will to explore and then learn more (Wang and Huang, 2018). However, extrinsic rewards can also have impact on curiosity at workplace because they recognize competent workers, empowering them to work on what they are already internally motivated to work on (Hennessey an Amabile, 2010; Chang and Shih, 2019).

Work-related curiosity is a valuable tool because of the existence necessity to learn at a fast pace to handle changes in the environment (Kashdan et al., 2018). Curiosity pushes the worker to grasp and improve the ability to adjust to the objectives stablished by the organization (Suma and Budi, 2021). If employees are instigated to be curious, they become aware of the lack of knowledge and end up working more than necessary, looking for information and exploring new ways to solve problems (Huang, 2021). As Çelik et al (2016) found out in their research, individual curiosity in relation to work is a positive antecedent of worker innovation.

Mussel (2010) discovered that there is a connection between curiosity and openness to experience. This has been later confirmed by Hassan et al. (2015) that openness to experience boosts curiosity related to work. In addition to this, according to Gino (2018), when managers motivate employees to be curious, there is a relationship of trust and collaboration enhanced by curiosity. All in all, curiosity helps workers to easily adjust to unknown and unpredictable situations, leading to new ways to solve problems related to work (Müceldili et al., 2020).

2.2 Workforce agility

Businesses, nowadays, must adjust to complicated and critical situations. Since they need to respond to unexpected circumstances accurately, it is necessary to value the workforce, which means consider it a significant asset that helps company to become successful. If companies are

continuously changing to adjust to the environment, agility in the workforce is extremely important (Storme et al., 2020).

Having said that, agility is not a capability that a company intrinsically has (Williams et al., 2013; Onyait, 2019). Agility is a dynamic capability that needs to be developed and improved, so that organizations can effectively and precisely face the changing circumstances. A dynamic capability is the ability to integrate and restructure inside and outside capacities in order to respond and react to the changings happening in the organization's surroundings (Teece et al., 1997). By cultivating dynamic capabilities and, in this case, agility, companies have more competitive advantage.

A way of creating competitive advantage is to build a workforce agility. Workforce agility has been renowned as the main element of organizational agility (Storme et al., 2020). An agile workforce improves the likelihood to remain in a disruptive and competitive environment (Katayama and Bennett, 1999, Karman, 2019) and brings many benefits to organizations (Breu et al., 2002; Sherehiy, 2008). For instance, it increases competitive advantage in the unpredictable market (Gehani, 1995; Karman, 2019) and effectively reacts to instability as well as helps the growth of productivity, profits, and market shares to (Goldman et al.,1995).

If a company desires to drive towards agility, become successful and competitive, an agile workforce is required (Plonka, 1997; Sherehiy, 2008), since an agile workforce is considered the core to organizational agility (Storme et al., 2020). Workforce agility is necessary not only for competitiveness, but also to reach strategic results and to foster critical skills (Onyait, 2019). With the purpose of creating workforce agility, companies need to have an atmosphere of cooperation as it allows agile workforce to be more rapid, flexible, and efficient (Breu et al., 2002; Muduli, 2013). However, it is not easy to reach workforce agility, and some authors, such as Alavi et al. (2014), proposed an algorithm, a road map, for organizations that need agile people. This road map helps organization observe if workforce actively and reactively respond to rapid and constant environmental changes.

Unfortunately, even though workforce agility is known to be of urge importance – because it conveys the idea of ability to be resilient and then adjust to the disturbance and changes that happen abruptly and very quickly –, research to date has not given an exact explanation for

workforce agility. Since this is a recent concept, there is no accurate and common definition for it (Tessarini and Saltorato, 2021) and there is not enough literature regarding what characteristics organizations must have to reach workers` agile performance (Sherehiy et al., 2014).

Because of the importance of agile workforce in organizational agility, agile organizations need to understand how to foster workforce agility (Breu et al., 2002; Sherehiy, 2008). It is known that workforce agility is influenced by organizational practices (Sherehiy and Karwowski, 2014). Sherehiy and Karwowski (2014) also found out that one of the main determinants of workforce agility is the independence of the employees in decision making given the fact that it has effects on proactivity and innovation, two important concepts for workforce agility.

Notwithstanding the lack of conceptualization of workforce agility, some researchers describe workforce agility from different perspectives. Some descriptions and definitions of agile workforce have their focus on mindset and behavior and attitude. A shift in the mindset and behavior to become agile is necessary for the company to survive in the unstable and unpredictable world (Dyer and Shafer, 2003). According to the authors, if employees are proactive, they initiate and improvise; if they show adaptive behavior, they undertake various roles, move around these roles rapidly and cooperate with the colleagues; if they demonstrate a generative behavior, it means they are both learning and educating, sharing information and knowledge.

When it comes to attitude (Plonka, 1997; Muduli, 2009), agile workers show good alibility to solve problems; they are open to changes, new ideas and new technologies; they have positive attitude in terms of learning and self-development; and have the capacity to come up with innovative ideas as well as accept different levels of responsibility. In addition to this, the authors argues that agile employees have the capacity to be more adaptive rather than reactive as well as have the ability to understand new knowledge more easily.

An agile laborforce can also be defined as workers who have wide understanding of business development and are capable of facing the market instability by taking advantage of turbulent conditions (Zhang and Sharifi, 2000, and Muduli, 2016). This way, agile workforce is formed by employees who can respond and adjust to changes in a way that benefits both the company and themselves (Müceldili et al., 2020). Therefore, the characteristics of agile

employees are the ability to rapidly process information, adapt to unstable workplace and to be motived by self-development, valuing information sharing and cooperation at work (Breu et al., 2002; Storme et al., 2020).

Müceldili et al (2020) claim in their study that agile performance can be achieved because the interest an employee has in new knowledge comes from curiosity. According to Herzenberg et al. (1998) and Hopp and Van Oyen (2004), workforce agility can offer a myriad of benefits that can be quality improvement, better customer service, learning-curve acceleration, improved organizational culture, economy of scope as well as of depth.

Workforce agility is now crucial for organizations and employees because it helps achieve strategic outcomes as well as leverage expertise (Jacomo, 2017; Onyait, 2019), but the agile workforce needs to be aligned with the needs of the organization to endure in the marketplace (Nijssen and Paauwe, 2012). As agile workforce has been considered to be a predictor of work projects` success and the organization's performance (Storme et al., 2020; Khan and Wisner, 2019), employees need to have multiple skills, that is to say competence and resources that can be used as competitive advantage (Teece et al, 1997). In this regard, it is fair to say that agility performance can be improved when employees are able to learn and strengthen their work-related knowledge (Müceldili et al, 2020).

2.3 Organizational culture

There are many theories regarding organizational culture. Despite the fact that there have been numerous studies on the topic of organizational culture, according to Wu et al. (2019), the idea of what organizational culture is descends from cultural anthropology. There is a myriad of definitions in the literature, and Schein (2004) argues that organizational culture is a pattern of beliefs created by a group while dealing with external adjustment and internal integration.

According to him, culture is a concept hard to define because it is a "multidimensional phenomenon" that cannot be reduced to a simple explanation. Therefore, In trying to understand better what organizational culture is, Schein (2004) suggests there are levels that are not taken into consideration, they are not differentiated, and he proposes three: 1) artefacts, in which is possible to see the organizational structure and processes; 2) values, which has to do with the

philosophy, the strategy and objectives; 3) basic underlying assumptions, which are the unconscious beliefs, thoughts, perceptions and feelings that are taken for granted.

Organizational culture encompasses a variety of aspects, and it is not inherent to the organization, so it cannot be created in a short period of time and must be regularly worked on through the company (Schermerhorn et al., 2002). Besides, there are different types of culture in distinctive companies, and, sometimes, more than one culture in the same organization (O'Donnel and Byle 2008). According to O'Donnel and Byle (2008), organizational culture is important because, when people are aware of and understand what culture is and its types, they can understand better the reason why management changes affect the organization.

The culture of a corporation is the basis people work on, demonstrating the group's effort to cope and learn (Schein, 2010). It is a concept that represents behavioral expectations and values at the organizational level (Wu et al., 2019) as well as it is made of principles that will guide and have effect on each and every working connection, influencing the attitude and the thought of employees (Carvalho et al., 2019). Culture is formed by values and beliefs learned by the members of the company and then transmitted within the organization (Yang, 2007). Organizational culture shapes employees' cognitions and perceptions, controlling how people within an organization should behave and pointing out those who belongs and who does not (Ott, 1989; Smit et al, 1997).

It involves behavioral norms and expectations that determine how employees conduct their work in a given work setting (Trus et. al., 2019) and it is a powerful social force that guides the firm in a specific direction to achieve a certain goal (Schein, 2010). Organizational culture also guides the employees in terms of making them aware of what to do and not to do, even when it has to do with their own work (Staniland, 1985; Tsai, 2011).

Culture is perceptible, and it is spread throughout a company, impacting on individual and group attitude and behavior, also affecting how people should interact (Schein, 2010). Based on this, culture can be seen as the personality of the company since it is based on values and norms, and it could also be deemed as a competitive advantage due to the fact that it differentiates a successful organization from another (Mukhopadhyay and Mukhopadhyay, 2020). When a

company has a strong culture, values, beliefs, and codes of conduct are implemented, helping employees accomplish their mission and goals (Tsai, 2011).

Corporate culture is referred to as the development of an organizational environment that not only respects the employee's independence, but also fosters local decision-making (Breu et al., 2002; Sherehiy, 2008). As organizational culture has significant impact on job satisfaction and commitment (Lok and Crawford, 2004) and it is considered to be the center of an organization's innovation ability (Tushman and O'Reilly, 1996), the management team needs to combine acknowledge agility principles with organizational and employee development and rewards to promote agile employees (Crocitto and Youssef, 2003). As a result, it is possible to develop a culture that encourages innovation, teamwork, and information dissemination (Crocitto and Youssef, 2003).

Nowadays, organizational culture is being regarded as of significance in relation to carrying out excellence programs in the companies (Araújo and Sampaio, 2014) and as one of the main successful elements for quality improvement initiatives and organization performance (Carvalho et al., 2019). Organizational culture has been considered of importance given that it relevantly influences organizational agility (Ghasemi, 2017), increasing or hindering the propensity for innovation (Rashid et al., 2004). Managers, for instance, can recognize what cultural elements have influence on management knowledge and agility in their organization and act on it (Carvalho et al., 2019).

Denison and Mishra (1995), for example, proved in their research that organizational culture has notable influence on performance improvement. Organizational culture also has impact on organizational structure; therefore, changes within the company need to be aligned with culture. If they are not in line, there will be an opposition from the workforce, which may arise conflict (Schein, 1984; Carvalho et al., 2019).

What is more, Crocitto and youseff (2003) argue that corporate culture is based on the organization`s decisions and actions, gradually representing corporate learning. The authors observed culture from the human behavior's perspective pointing out that having a culture of motivation and rewards enhances the capacity to be agile. They further argue that a culture of

change that can be easily noticed at any level in the company can help companies handle and respond to the unstable market.

Organizational culture influences employees' behavior through management decisions to reach the desired organizational results (Carvalho et al., 2019). However, according to the author, in order for a company to be successful, the operational excellence program implemented has to be in line with the culture. An operational excellence program or project helps the organization go through changes, and it is a leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving mindset that leads to constant improvement across the whole company (Dobni, Ritchie and Zerbe, 2000; Carvalho et al., 2019). Culture, in turn, has to support and internalize these programs or projects and put them in practice on a daily basis, continuously (Carvalho et al., 2019).

The culture established, in turn, must be considered suitable for the circumstances, for the company's strategy as well as for the atmosphere of the organization so that the company can perform better them those with an inappropriate fit. If the culture is not adequate for the atmosphere and strategy, the organization will have problems in reaching their goals (Carvalho et al., 2019).

The culture of a company is deemed to be extremely essential, as it determines whether or not the organization is a joyful and healthy place to work (Tsai 2011). To give an example, if the culture is supportive, creating a people-oriented and encouraging environment, and if the employee's motivation and the corporate culture match, this employee can be more effective in their current position and reach their full potential (Shadur et al., 1999; Yiing, 2009).

Therefore, it is necessary to look into the role organizational culture plays in the relationship between work-related curiosity and agile workforce and if it overlooks this relationship that could be extremely important to the company's success and development.

3. Hypotheses

Empirical research regarding the role of antecedents and mediators in the relationship between the work-related curiosity and agile workforce is rare. Therefore, this present study aims to investigate four hypotheses.

1) The first one claims that organizational culture is an antecedent of the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. In this hypothesis, organizational culture could have some influence on work-related curiosity, fostering the employee`s curiosity, allowing them to ask questions and, as a result, promoting an agile workforce.

2) Hypothesis two considers that organizational culture may be a predictor of workforce agility.

3) The third hypothesis concerns organizational culture just as a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

4) The fourth one has to do with the positive relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility, in which the former is the predictor of the latter. Curious employees tend to show more adaptability to new circumstances, resilience, and proactivity (Sherehiy and Karnowski, 2014, Müceldili, 2020), and these characteristics are important to an agile workforce.
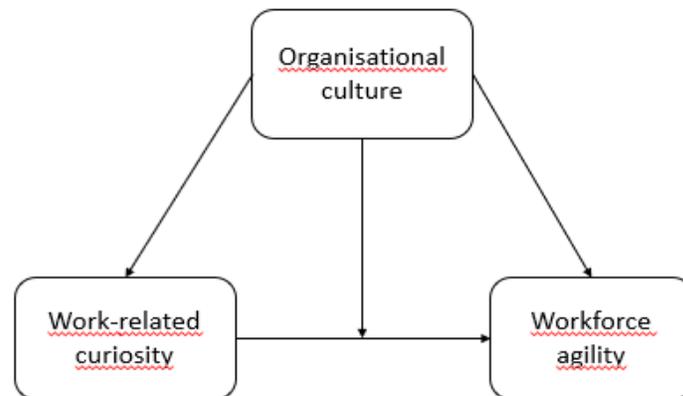

Figure 1

4. Methodology

4.1 Design

The study was a mixed methods design combining a correlational and a between groups designs. For the purpose of the main question – which is the role of organizational in the

relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility –, organizational culture was considered the independent variable that can influence the two dependent variables: work-related curiosity and workforce agility. In addition, organizational culture was also investigated as a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

Workplace curiosity was looked into as a dependent variable (concerning organizational culture) as well as the predictor variable of workforce agility. Finally, workforce agility was deemed to be the criterion variable in the relationship. Demographic information such as gender, age, education, location, employment status was also used so as to analyze if they have any influence in curiosity at workplace and agile workforce.

4.2 Participants

For this present study, first participants consented their participation. Following that, data were collected from participants (N=62) currently employed in private or public sector of any type of service. The targeted audience must be resident in either Ireland and Brazil, and it is in the range between 18-65 years old. Respondents were asked about their level of education (B.sc, M.Sc., Ph.D.), employment status (Full time or Part time) and gender (male or female).

Of the 62 respondents, 57.1% were male. Regarding the age, the majority of the respondents were in the range from 31 to 45 years old (58.8%). The number of people who live in Brazil are slightly higher than the number of the participants who live in Ireland, accounting for 52.4% and 47.5% respectively. More than half have Bachelor`s degree (55.9%) whereas some had a master's degree (32.4%), a small number accounts for Ph.D. (8.8%) and less than 5% preferred not to say. Regarding the employment status, most of the participants were employed full time (88.2%) against 8.8% part time and less than 5% is seeking opportunity. Only one person lives in Belgium, which is not relevant to the present study.

A link to the questionnaire was shared on social media (specially Linkedin), so data were collected from online survey.

4.3 Materials

To investigate the proposed relationship, scales from prior literature were used to measure the variables. Participants were asked to respond a 3 - point scale questionnaire (1- low, 2-medium, and 3-high) to measure workforce agility (Appendix C). This scale was designed by Muduli (2013), using the workforce agility one prescribed by Breu et al. (2002) as a reference. It has seven subscales, which measure agility behavior and attitude, reflecting dimensions in relation to flexibility, adaptability, developmental, competence, speed, informative and collaboration. Questions like "I am flexible to quickly change from task to task, job to job and place to place" and "I am comfortable with change, new ideas, and new technologies in my organization" were asked to the participants.

For the purpose of measuring organizational culture, the Japanese organizational culture scale – JOCS (Tang and Kim, 2000) was used. It is a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagrees to strongly agrees (Appendix C). This scale compromised four factors: family orientation and loyalty, open communication, team approach and knowledge of managers. In relation to "team approach", for instance, one of que question was "My manager encourages people to speak up when they disagree with a decision". Regarding "open communication", they were asked "My manager gives me the freedom to express idea.". When it comes to "family orientation/loyalty", questions such as "My company emphasizes open communication." were asked. Lastly, concerning "knowledge of managers", they were asked "My manager often communicates the overall organizational goals to us.".

Work-related curiosity was assessed by the respondents through the 7 - point Likert scale ranging from 1 (does not apply at all) to 7 (strongly applies) of Mussel et al. (2012). This scale looks into to what extent employees engage with work-related information (Appendix C). As an example, some of the questions were "I look for the opportunities to make improvements at work.", "When confronted with complex problems, I like to look for new solutions.", "I am eager to learn.".

4.4 Procedure

Respondents were told that the questionnaire was part of a research to investigate the relationship between workforce agility, work-related curiosity, and organizational culture. A link was shared on social medial so that they could click on it to answer an online survey that took 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Firstly, the participants consented to take part in the research and answered demographic questions. Following that, they answered the work-related curiosity, workforce agility and organizational culture scales. Data were collected in Google forms and the IBM SPSS was used to interpret them.

4.5 Ethics

No vulnerable group was used, since they were all over 18 and capable of responding for themselves. No one was deceived and there was no harm. Participants were told their anonymity would be kept as well as they had the right to withdraw at any moment. In addition to this, respondents were made aware they could email the supervisor and the supervisee at any time in case they had any doubts and questions concerning the questionnaire. Inform consent was collected from participants and data were gathered from people who voluntarily answered the survey.

5. Results

For the purpose of analysis, linear regression was used in order to examine the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility, organizational culture and workforce agility and work-related curiosity and organizational culture. It also investigated if organizational culture mediates the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. The software used to measure these relationships was SPSS. Demographic information was also measured in order to examine if they have any type of influence on the variables studied in this research.

Table 1 below depicts the means and standard deviations for all the three variables investigated in this study, along with demographic information (age, education, and location). This table also shows Pearson's correlations for the studied variables. It was found that workforce agility is significantly correlated with curiosity at workplace (p < 0.01). However, organizational culture does not correlate with workforce agility whatsoever (p=.067).

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the variables and correlation among the variables (N=62)

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4	5
1)Age	2.03	0.60					
2)Location	1.54	0.50	.49**				
3)Education	1.56	0.66	-.005	-.24			
4)Work-related curiosity	55.03	14.06	.24	.09	.06		
5)Workforce agility	16.20	2.92	.43	-.05	-.01	.46**	
6)Organizational culture	49.14	11.63	.04	-.09	-.07	.33**	.23

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

A reliability analysis (Table 2) was carried out on the three-part questionnaire, taking into account all the items of each variable. The Cronbach`s alpha showed that the questionnaire has an acceptable reliability, without the necessity to eliminate any questions or items.

Table 2 Reliability - Cronbach`s results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean
Work-related curiosity	.958	2.31
Workforce agility	.765	5.50
Organizational culture	.872	7.89

Firstly, analyzing the relationship between organization culture and work-related curiosity (Table 3), it is possible to conclude that the former has a strong predictive value in relation to the latter. The low adjusted R2 (.096) depicts this relationship is not straightly related. However, organizational culture is considered a strong antecedent of work-related curiosity and there is a strong correlation between these two variables (F (1,60) = 15.9, p=.008) as it was predicted in hypothesis 1. The variance of 33% (β = .33) in curiosity is result of organizational culture, supporting hypothesis 1, which is organizational culture as a predictor of work-related curiosity.

Table 3 Organizational culture as a predictor of work-related curiosity and workforce agility

Variable	Adjusted R Square	Sig	Standardized Beta
Work-related curiosity	.096	.008	.33
Workforce agility	.039	0.67	.23

Since there are four different aspects in the organizational culture ('family', 'community', 'team' and 'knowledge'), a multiple linear regression was applied to test work-related curiosity along with each of them individually (Table 4). The results show a higher adjusted R2 (.197) which explains the variance in work-related curiosity. Furthermore, the four dimensions have a significant contribution to work-related curiosity (p=.002) and that "team approach" seems to be the one with the strongest correlation with curiosity related to work (Family, β = -.20/Community, β = -.08/Team, β = .40/Knowledge, β = .16). See Table 4 below.

Table 4 Dimensions of organizational culture as predictors of work-related curiosity

Variable	Adjusted R Square	Sig	Standardized Beta (Family)	Standardized Beta (Community)	Standardized Beta (Team)	Standardized Beta (Knowledge)
Work-related curiosity	0.197	.002	-.20	-.08	.40	.16

Secondly, in a similar way, workforce agility was set as a dependent variable to analyze whether it is affected by organizational culture or not. The current findings in Table 3 show a low adjusted R2 (.039), which indicates that there is no high significance in this relationship. Additionally, organizational culture does not significantly predict workforce agility (F(1,60) = 15.9, p=.67) and workforce agility is not strongly affected by culture. Organizational culture explains only 23% of the variance in agile workforce (β = .23, p>.05). Thus, the results mean that we reject the null hypothesis.

Furthermore, since organizational culture does not account for the variation in workforce agility, which means that there is no statistical difference, the former variable cannot be deemed to be a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. Thus, it goes against hypothesis 2 and hypothesis 3, which are organizational culture as a predictor of workforce agility and as a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

Multiple linear regression was used one more time to examine workforce agility with each dimension of culture. It was found that the adjusted R2 is low (.032), with an inadequate p (p= .212), showing there is no significance in the relationship. These aspects do not have impact on workforce agility at all. Nevertheless, out of the variables, "knowledge of the managers" is the strongest one, contributing about 37% influence on the variance in workforce agility. It is not considered an important influence, though. (Family, β = .14/Community, β = -.16/Team, β = -.02/Knowledge, β = .37). See Table 5 below.

Table 5 Dimensions of culture as predictors of workforce agility

Variable	Adjusted R Square	Sig	Standardized Beta (Family)	Standardized Beta (Community)	Standardized Beta (Team)	Standardized Beta (Knowledge)
Workforce agility	0.32	.212	.14	-.16	-.02	.37

Finally, concerning curiosity at workplace and agile workforce (Table 6), the results show that the adjusted R2 is high (.197), which means that the more curious a person is, the more it

predicts workforce agility. It was also found that work-related curiosity significantly predicts workforce agility, ($F_{(1,60)}$ = 15.9, $p < .001$) and that 46% of the variance in agility can be explained by changes in curiosity (β=.46). They are directly correlated; thereby supporting hypothesis 4, which proposes that there is a positive relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

Table 6 Work-related curiosity as a predictor of workforce agility

Variable	Adjusted R Square	Sig	Standardized Beta
Workforce agility	0.197	<.001	.46

Investigation concerning the work-related curiosity and workforce agility constructs along with the groups in the demographic information was also carried out (Table 7). The results show that there is no significant difference between males and females on levels of curiosity ($t_{(60)}$ = 1.07, $p = .29$). Furthermore, there is no significant main effect of age on curiosity ($p > .05$). The pairwise comparisons result also reveal no significance between the three groups ($p > .05$). Regarding location, it has no significant main influence on curiosity ($p > .05$). There is a significant main influence of education on curiosity ($F_{(3,58)}$ = 2.79, $p = .049$) and analysis of pairwise comparisons showed that participants with a Master`s degree have a significantly higher curiosity score ($p = .03$).

In relation to agility, there is a significant main influence of education on agility ($F_{(3,58)}$ = 5.54, $p = .002$). Analysis of pairwise comparisons shows that participants with a Master`s degree have a significant higher agility score ($p = .04$), followed by participants with Bachelor's degree. The findings also reveal that there is no notable difference between the two genders in reference to workforce agility ($t_{(60)}$ = -.71, $p = .47$). It was also verified that there is no relevant effect of age on workforce agility ($p > .05$). In terms of pairwise comparisons, there is not an important difference between the three age groups, with $p > .05$. Results also show that location does not have any influence on workforce agility either ($p > .05$).

Table 7 T-test and Anova among the groups and variables

Variable	Groups	Mean	SD	*t*	*F*	*df*	*p*
Curiosity	male	57	12.06	1.07	2.72	60	.29
	female	53.18	15.7	1.07	2.72	60	.29
	age	55.03	14.06	30.8	1.93	61	.15
	location	54.91	14.1	-29.5	.56	60	.45
	education	55.03	14.06	18.4	2.79	61	.049
Agility	male	15.93	3.06	-.71	.51	61	.47
	female	16.46	2.81	-.71	.51	61	.47
	age	16.21	2.92	.33	.11	61	.74
	location	16.21	2.92	.39	1.35	59	.69
	education	16.21	2.92	18.4	5.54	61	.002

6. Discussions

This paper intended to explore and establish potential links between the organizational culture and the role it plays on the relationship between workforce agility and work-related curiosity. The key point of this research was to investigate if there is an antecedent or a mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. This research also investigated if corporate culture can be a predictor of work-related curiosity and workforce agility. In order to conduct this investigation, the relationship between curiosity related to work and agile workforce was also examined.

It is believed that this study contributes to the literature on organizational culture because it looks into the correlation among three important elements in a company: work-related curiosity, organizational culture, and workforce agility. Up to now, this study is the only one that empirically investigated if organizational culture has any type of influence on work-related curiosity, on workforce agility and on the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

To start off with, my assumption was that organizational culture had direct impact and influence on curiosity at workplace. As expected, the current evidence corroborated the hypothesized relationship between organizational culture and work-related curiosity. Since organizational culture influences employee's behaviour and attitude (Schein, 2010), it could be interpreted that organizational culture makes difference in terms of encouraging work-related curiosity in employees. These results address the suggestion made by Müceldili et al. (2020) –

which was to look into the role of organizational culture in fostering employees' curiosity – and concluded that organizational culture is important when it comes to encouraging curiosity at work.

Moreover, as mentioned previously, organizational culture questionnaire had four dimensions, which were measured separately with work-related curiosity. The aspect "team approach" had the highest influence on the variance in work-related curiosity (β = .40, Table 5) due to the fact that a good number of the participants strongly agree that they were encouraged to work as a team as well as to exchange opinions and ideas within their group at work. This shows how important it is to have a culture that respects and support the autonomy of the employees, confirming what Breu et al. (2002) suggested.

Furthermore, these findings ratify Schein (1984) and Carvalho et al. (2019) theory. The authors suggest that culture is essential for teamwork because it has impact on organizational structure. An appropriate structure, in turn, enables a more effective teamwork (Muduli, 2016).

Even though this study works with unidimensional curiosity, these results are important because they show how significant it is to have a team that interacts and is open to conversation. Therefore, this study extends what Kashdan et al. (2019) proposed. According to the authors, one of the dimensions of work-related curiosity is "openness to people's ideas". When employees listen to and value what others have to say and accept different opinions, as well as share knowledge, they are open to new ways of dealing with work and give proper attention to the company's environment.

Secondly, in order to analyze if organizational culture mediates the relationship between work-related curiosity and agile workforce, it was necessary to examine if organizational culture is a predictor of workforce agility. Contrary to expectations, the results illustrate that organizational culture has no considerable effect on workforce agility. The rejection of hypothesis 2 is an interesting finding because organizational culture is a fundamental element to improve organization performance (Carvalho, 2019), and an agile workforce is deemed to be important for the good performance of a company. In addition, this study also goes against what Chonko and Jones (2005) propose, that culture is a source of agility in the company.

With regard to the relationships between workforce agility and the organizational culture dimensions, the results depict that they did not present significance. Surprisingly, even though respondents answered "strongly agree" to all questions in "open communication", in which they are able to express their ideas and ask questions to their bosses, and have their ideas and input valued, it does not mean that organizational culture is an explanatory variable of workforce agility. Prior studies state that organizational culture is a possible enabler of agility, and it is important for organization performance and success (Carvalho et al, 2019), but the results of the present research do not pose relative importance on the organizational culture as a predictor of workforce agility. Furthermore, these results do not agree with the theory from Breu et al. (2002), which considers teamwork environment important to encourage workforce agility

The dimension "knowledge of managers" explains 37% of variance in workforce agility. This may be due to the fact that participants agree that their manager is fit for the role and communicates the average objectives and goals of the company, as well as provides guidance and training for performance improvement. These aspects are important to build an agile workforce. As Alavi et al. (2014) stated, workforce agility is encouraged by knowledge and disposition to learn, and agility has to do with support activities promoted by the company in case the company wishes to become agile. This way, it is possible to respond to and to handle the constant changes in the world.

These results also corroborate the suggestion made by Crocitto and Youssef (2003), which refers to the importance of having a leader capable of fostering employees' improvement. In addition to this, knowledge of manager was important to workforce agility because managers are seen as a person who can teach the employees, help them decide what to do in a specific situation and also reinforce the philosophy of the company (Tang and Kim, 2000).

Finally, this study demonstrated that work-related curiosity and workforce agility are strongly correlated, hence extending and reinforcing the empirical result from Müceldili (2020). The author found out that curiosity is positively related to agile workforce; therefore, it fosters employee`s agility performance.

The findings revealed that there was no effects of age, gender and location on work-related curiosity. However, differences were found in the effect of respondents with Master's

degree, which is the highest influence, followed by bachelor`s degree. With reference to workforce agility, results showed that education had impact on it, but the higher effect comes from participants with Master's degree, then Bachelor`s degree. The percentage of master accounted for 32.4%. Since Ph.D. accounted for only 8.8% of participants, it was not relevant to consider if the higher the education, the more it affects work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

To sum up, organizational culture does not play the role of a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility because it is not an antecedent of workforce agility. Notwithstanding this result, organizational culture is an antecedent of work-related curiosity, and curiosity predicts workforce agility. Therefore, it could be said that organizational culture influences the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility.

7. Future research

Even though the present study provides several relevant contributions to the literature, there are limitations that need to be addressed to in future research.

A cross-sectional design was used in this study to investigate the role organizational culture plays in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility, and if organizational culture mediates this relationship, and to what extent mediation happens. The results show that there is no mediation effect because culture does not influence workforce agility. However, since results were collected in a specific point in time, it would be interesting to investigate if the correlation among these constructs changes over time; thus, future studies could use longitudinal research, especially in post-covid scenario, with hybrid workforce and more professionals working from home.

The current study was based on a number of participants that was not considerably large, so future research could use a greater sample of respondents to examine the relationship between organizational culture, work-related curiosity and workforce agility more accurately.

With a greater number of respondents, future studies could also analyse if, and to what extent, organizational culture could be considered a moderator of this relationship.

One of the limitations of the current research could be the location of the participants. The data collected for this research was from two countries: Brazil and Ireland. So, for a general concept of the relationship here investigated, future research could apply the current research model in distinct cultural environments and contexts, either confirming the findings or showing that in broader context there is a new outcome.

A further limitation of this study is the novelty of the topic. Since there is a lot to be explored in the field of work-related curiosity and workforce agility, time is necessary to build up a more extensive, completed and structured theoretical thesis. Opportunities for future studies could be to look into the other antecedents of work-related curiosity, what other aspects from an organization could be considered important to foster curiosity at workplace. Future research could also investigate the relationship between different types of curiosity and workforce agility, working with multidimensional concept of curiosity and using the five-dimensional curiosity scale created by Kashdan et al. (2018).

There is also scope to investigate if there is a mediator or moderator in the relationship between organizational culture and work-related curiosity since, according to results showed in this research, they are not directly correlated; organizational culture only predicts curiosity in work settings. It could also be possible to investigate if and how the role of leadership can foster curiosity and even mediate or moderate the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. It could also be examined whether leadership styles have any influence on curiosity and workforce performance – and, if so, to what degree – to create workforce agility. An investigation on what type of organizational culture has effect on workforce agility could also be conducted.

This study also took education into account. The number of participants with master's degree was smaller than the number of those with bachelor's degree, but the results showed that people with master's degrees present higher level of curiosity and the level of curiosity decreases in people with Ph.D. The number of participants with Ph.D. is not enough to verify these results, and this educational imbalance may have affected the findings of the current

research. Therefore, future research, in a more substantial pool of participants, could explore if a direct relationship exists between higher levels of educationand higher levels of curiosity.

Future research could also make a comparison focusing on participants with M.Sc. and Ph.D., using a greater number of participants. In this case, it could also further investigate if companies need to invest in education and trainings or even encourage employees to have a masters degree to foster curiosity and, as a result, building a higher performance of the workforce.

8. Conclusion and implications

The rapid and constant changes in the marketplace demand organizations to be more proactive and competitive to a have good performance and, consequently, survive the turmoil or even to subsist in the business environment. Companies must be able to deal with the fast-paced business dynamic, accepting the challenges in the world, then remodelling themselves and adjusting their culture to fit in the constant changing environment.

Curiosity at workplace is a vast unexplored research area and still lacks understandings that can offer benefits. It could be deemed to be the explanation for the innovativeness and proactiveness of some organizations. Even though it is a promising study field, the work-related curiosity remains poorly investigated.

Interest in workforce agility has also increased in recent years. Despite the importance of this type of workforce, there is little research on the topic. Organizational culture is also important to the company, but there is no paper investigating the relationship between work-related curiosity, workforce agility and organizational culture. For instance, there is no study exploring if there is a link between organizational culture and workforce agility. Therefore, it is believed that the findings of this study will add value to the existing literature of the three constructs.

This paper not only recognizes the importance of job-related curiosity, but also proves that organizational culture is an antecedent of work-related curiosity and that curiosity in relation to work predicts workforce agility. Furthermore, the current study also clarifies that organizational

culture has no mediation role between work-related curiosity and workforce agility and does not predict workforce agility.

The findings of this research have some implications for companies and management. As enterprises need to work towards agility to reach sustained success (Carvalho et al., 2019), organizations should worry about finding a culture that is aligned with the strategy, so that it can foster work-related curiosity. As a result, this would improve the employees' performance and create an agile workforce. The results also showed that the knowledge of the manager is important, and it had some influence on workforce agility, so it would be beneficial if companies could invest in management trainings, workshops and foster knowledge-sharing.

Another suggestion is to build a culture and a work environment that allow employees to reveal their curiosity while encouraging them to be curious and to ask questions. The constraint of curiosity not only stops employees from proposing creative ideas, but also prevents the company to develop its strengths and achieve agility. Therefore, organizations should take advantage of curiosity traits as it only provides advantages. Research from Kashdan (2015), for instance, revealed that while 65% of the respondents agree that curiosity is necessary to come up with new and innovative ideas, almost the same percentage declared they feel discouraged, so they do not ask questions.

Managerial initiatives should be prioritize to look into conditions, situations and attitudes that can refrain employees from asking questions, ultimately undermining their curiosity. Managers should also observe if and which under circumstances workers engage with each other, exchanging ideas and exploring the new, so that they can insert best practices that encourage teamwork spirit.

Team approach helps employees to come up with new ideas, find solutions to complex problems as well as face the unstable market with more confidence. Workers need to be aware that, if they are not capable of doing something, this is not a problem due to the fact that they have the necessary support. In this sense, employees explore more, expanding their interest and alternatives. This improves the performance of the workforce, allowing them to reach their personal goals and the goals set by the company.

Since curiosity is an intrinsic motivation, workers are self-motivated to learn, managers should be able to identify what may pique the employee`s interest, investigate any situations and/or conditions that can inhibit their motivation and might as well, if possible, implement a culture of job rotation. This way, job boredom could be prevented, for instance. Other initiatives could be the the implementations of training and development (OJT), which bolsters self-assurance and capabilities, driving towards agility.

To conclude, the complex and uncertain environment was worsened by COVID-19 and now the crisis between Russia and Ukraine changed the way organizations work. So, the goal of this research is to help companies to understand the roles of the three constructs here investigated and to be in a position to build upon these learnings, all in effort to improve employee satisfaction and pave the way for improvements in workforce performance. One of the key focus areas of the new business reshaping is a new emphasis on workforce agility and work-relate curiosity to help manage and adapt to unforeseen changes and challenges.

In a post-pandemic world, in which people work entirely from home or in a hybrid system, organizations should create programs to motivate and cultivate employee's interest and curiosity, since it is considered a valuable asset to reach a better workforce performance.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Information sheet

Research project title: Investigating the role organizational culture plays in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility: antecedent or mediator?

Student Researcher: Débora Maria Martins Acioly Ribeiro Dias(10578895@mydbs.ie)

Research Supervisor: Deaglan Page

About the Project

I am a masters student at Dublin Business School and I am carrying out my thesis project under the direct supervision of _____ on the subject of the role organisational culture plays in the relationship between work-related curiosity and agile workforce.

The aim of my study is to investigate and determine if and/or to what extent organisational culture plays a significant role as a mediator in the relationship between work-related curiosity and workforce agility. It will also look into the possibility whether organisational culture could be an antecedent of this relationship.

I would like to invite you to take part in this survey. As a participant in this study, you would be required to answer a questionnaire and possibly share your feelings concerning work-related curiosity, organisational culture and workforce agility.

Data Protection

The data you provide as part of this questionnaire/experiment will be fully anonymous. I will not gather any direct personally identifying information about you or anyone close to you. You will be asked to provide optional demographic information of a broad nature about yourself. Your data will be collated into a larger dataset and analysed at the group rather than the individual

level. Your data will only be used for academic purposes and will not be shared with anyone for commercial purposes.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part in this study?

In addition to providing much appreciated assistance to the student researcher, the main benefit of taking part in this study will be your contribution to academic research, which aims to expand knowledge and generate new insights. There will be no risks posed to you as a participant in this study, either physical or psychological, beyond that which is normally expected of day-to-day activities.

If you are interested in taking part…

If you are interested in taking part, please review the information provided in the consent form and if you are happy to proceed with the study then please indicate your willingness to take part by ticking the appropriate box / signing your name where appropriate.

You are under no obligation to take part in this study or to provide a reason if you decide not to take part. You may choose not to take part without fear of penalty. If you agree to take part, you have the right to cease participation and withdraw your data at any time for any reason without fear of penalty. The data will not be used by any member of the project team for commercial purposes.

<div align="center">

Appendix B – Consent form

<u>Consent Form</u>

</div>

I_____ voluntarily agree to take part in this research study.

I understand that I am not obliged to take part in this study and that my participation in the study is entirely voluntary.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time or refuse to answer any question without the need to provide reason and without fear of negative consequences.

I understand that my responses will be anonymous.

I understand that in the case of completing an anonymous questionnaire, it will not be possible to subsequently withdraw my data due to the fact that there will be no personally identifying information attached to my responses.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

I understand that signed consent forms will be retained for some time until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation.

I confirm that I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study with satisfactory answers provided.

☐ I confirm that I have read and fully understood the information provided and statements above and I agree to participate in this research.

Appendix C – Questionnaires

WORK-RELATED CURIOSITY

Does not apply at all			partially applies			strongly applies
①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦

1.	I am interested in how my contribution impacts the company.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
2.	I enjoy developing new strategies.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

3.	Regarding practical problems, I'm also interested in the underlying theory.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
4.	When confronted with complex problems, I like to look for new solutions.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
5.	I enjoy pondering and thinking.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
6.	I am eager to learn.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
7.	I keep thinking about a problem until I've solved it.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
8.	I challenge already existing theories critically.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
9.	I carry on seeking information until I am able to understand complex issues.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
10.	I try to improve work processes by making innovative suggestions.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

WORKFORCE AGILITY

Low	Medium	High
①	②	③

11.	I am comfortable with change, new ideas, and new technologies in my organization.	① ② ③
12.	I am flexible to quickly change from task to task, job to job and place to place.	① ② ③
13.	I map my skills, benchmark for skill assessment, and develop the skill.	① ② ③
14.	I am comfortable with cross-functional project team, collaborative ventures with other companies, or a virtual organization.	① ② ③

15. I am techno savvy and have knowledge in advanced manufacturing technologies, IT skill, use of mobile technologies etc. ① ② ③

16. I take shortest possible time to develop my skills, adjust to new environment and collecting information. ① ② ③

17. I take personal interest in collecting information about my organization and other related organization. ① ② ③

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Strongly disagree		partially agrees		strongly agrees
①	②	③	④	⑤

Family orientation / Loyalty

18. My company tries to create a unique family atmosphere. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

19. My company emphasizes strong loyalty and dedication. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

20. My company treats each employee as a total person. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

21. I feel that my organization has a real interest in the welfare ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
and overall satisfaction of those who work here.

Open communication.

22. My manager encourages people to speak up when they ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
disagree with a decision.

23. My manager gives me the freedom to express idea. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

24. I feel that my manager values my ideas and inputs. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

25. My manager is open to all questions. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Team approach.

26. I have a chance to meet with my manager one-to-one ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

at least twice a year to discuss performance and goals.

27. My manager encourages people to work as a team. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

28. My manager encourages people who work in my group ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

   to exchange opinions and ideas.

Knowledge of managers

29. My manager often communicates the overall ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

   organizational goals to us.

30. I believe my manager has the knowledge and ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

   training to be a good leader.

31. My manager provides help, training, and guidance so ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

   that I can improve my performance.