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AMBIDEXTROUS MOTIVATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS CORNERSTONES OF CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN HIGHLY INNOVATIVE SPANISH COMPANIES: ENCOURAGING EMPLOYEES TO CREATE AND INNOVATE

LA MOTIVACIÓN AMBIDIESTRA Y LA INTELIGENCIA EMOCIONAL COMO PILARES DE LA CREATIVIDAD Y LA INNOVACIÓN EN EMPRESAS ESPAÑOLAS ALTAMENTE INNOVADORAS: ANIMANDO A LOS EMPLEADOS A CREAR E INNOVAR

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of ambidextrous motivation on employee performance in terms of creativity and product innovation. Lack of motivation is currently one of the main work problems that hinders the development of new ideas and innovation and is also the key cause of absenteeism and employee turnover. Therefore, through an ambidextrous management approach based on structural equation analysis, we aim to elucidate the impact of good ambidextrous motivation management on creativity and innovation. Data obtained from the CEOs of 245 highly innovative Spanish companies in 14 industries is used and is analysed using structural equation models. The relationships between CEOs' perceptions of their employees' intrinsic motivation and creativity and product innovation performance in highly innovative Spanish companies are robust. Furthermore, the positive relationships between motivation, creativity, and product innovation are stronger in highly innovative Spanish companies where CEOs perceive they have employees with high emotional intelligence. The efforts and investments made in employee motivation support the development of new ideas and product innovation success. The emotional management of employees can help enhance innovation.

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JEL Codes: J24, O32, M10, M53, M12, M19

Resumen

El presente estudio examina los efectos que tiene la motivación ambidiestra en el desempeño de los empleados en términos de creatividad e innovación de productos. En la actualidad, la falta de motivación es uno de los principales problemas laborales que pueden frenar el desarrollo de nuevas ideas y la innovación, pero también son la causa principal de absentismo y rotación de los empleados. Por ello, mediante un enfoque de gestión ambidiestro basado en un análisis de ecuaciones estructurales, tratamos de dilucidar el impacto de una buena gestión ambidiestra de la motivación en la creatividad y la innovación. Se han utilizado datos obtenidos de los CEOs de 245 empresas españolas altamente innovadoras en catorce industrias y han sido analizados con modelos de ecuaciones estructurales. Las relaciones entre la percepción que tienen los CEOs de la motivación intrínseca y la creatividad de sus empleados sobre el rendimiento de la innovación de productos en las empresas españolas altamente innovadoras son más fuertes. Además, las relaciones positivas entre la motivación, la creatividad y la innovación de productos son más fuertes en empresas españolas altamente innovadoras donde perciben los CEOs que cuentan con empleados con alta inteligencia emocional. Los esfuerzos e inversiones realizadas en la motivación de los empleados apoyan el desarrollo de nuevas ideas y el éxito de la innovación de productos. La gestión emocional de los empleados puede ayudar a mejorar la innovación.

Palabras clave: desempeño de innovación de productos, creatividad, motivación ambidiestra, motivación intrínseca y extrínseca, inteligencia emocional, empresas españolas altamente innovadoras.
Códigos JEL: J24, O32, M10, M53, M12, M19

1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation and innovation are two fundamental strategic elements for all firms. Therefore, these elements have become important areas of focus for strategic management, and the most relevant topics in the literature on management (Meisler, 2014; Sung *et al.*, 2017; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016; Wine *et al.*, 2012). However, presently, there are only a few studies that have assessed these elements, which are employees' internal resources, from the perspectives of CEOs (Crespo *et al.*, 2022; Inostroza *et al.*, 2023). The present work goes a step further by determining the role of employees from the perspective of CEOs and how employees' tastes, preferences, motivations, and emotions can be channelled toward innovation in firms (Caniëls *et al.*, 2014).

The economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic may have served as perfect opportunities to implement new motivation management systems that not only allow obtaining greater economic benefits in the short-term but also sustainable growth. The business world asks itself: How can a true feeling of commitment be obtained in organizations? The literature indicates that certain internal resources of firms are adequate for fostering innovation (Galende *and* Suárez, 1999; Trivedi and Srivastava, 2024). Few studies (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Raisch and Birkinshaw, 2008) have analysed, in an ambidextrous manner (orientation towards exploitation and exploration), the effects of the emotional dimension of firms' employees on innovation results.

This study posits that the assessment of motivation within firms should transcend management alternatives because each entity and individual differ across highly variable conditions and characteristics. An in-depth study of motivation is necessary to assess emotional intelligence (EI) that will predictably generate enhanced innovation outcomes. Additionally, 'ambidextrous organizations' should be able to distinguish between the two main forms of management, namely, one associated with the accumulation and exploitation of existing resources (stock generators) and the other emphasizing learning, exploring, and innovating (flow and capacities generators) in organizations (Jyoti and Choudhary, 2024).

Our study indicates that there may be other types of indirect and positive contingent relationships that can intensify the connection between motivation and innovation. Particularly, we posit that EI is a variable that can moderate or interact with motivation and creativity, serving as a predecessor of innovation. Concerning these contingent-type relationships between motivation and product innovation, it is imperative to assess other variables, such as EI and creativity. Therefore, we use a research model with variables that have been measured based on the perceptions CEOs have about the motivation, creativity, and EI of their employees and CEOs' real knowledge about the product innovation performance (PIP) in their organizations.

This study contributes to PIP based on the lens of managers and highly innovative Spanish companies. The value of this study lies in its findings that connect the efforts and investments made in employee motivation with the development of new ideas and the success of product innovation through CEOs' perceptions of their employees and knowledge in terms of innovation. Motivated employees tend to be more engaged and put great effort into their tasks, which increases a company's overall productivity. Understanding what motivates employees allows leaders to create strategies that foster an efficient and productive work environment. This raises the question of what the interrelationships are among intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, creativity, and PIP.

Motivated employees, especially those who feel valued and supported, are likely to experiment and generate new ideas. Intrinsic motivation is particularly crucial for creativity because employees who enjoy their work and find meaning in what they do are more likely to think outside the box and come up with innovative solutions. Innovation requires a combination of new ideas and the ability to implement them: Employee motivation contributes to both aspects. Motivated employees are more likely to participate in the development and implementation of innovations. Additionally, a work environment that fosters motivation can reduce resistance to change and increase organizational adaptability. This prompts another question: Can creativity be a direct driver of PIP?

Besides, companies that properly recognize and reward their employees can retain their most talented and creative workers, thereby reducing turnover and the costs associated with hiring and training new employees. Therefore, employee motivation contributes to a positive work environment, where employees feel valued and respected. This, in turn, promotes a culture of collaboration and mutual support, which is essential for the generation and implementation of new ideas. Studying employee motivation is essential for any company that aspires to foster creativity and innovation. By understanding and applying effective motivation strategies, companies can improve performance, retain talent, promote a positive work environment, and increase their adaptability and competitiveness in the market (Costamagna *et al.*, 2022). Ultimately, motivation is a key driver of long-term organizational success.

This study aims to make CEOs and managers of organizations aware of the positive impact that knowing the profile of their employees can have in terms of EI because the impact of their actions in the management of their employees' motivations could vary depending on whether or

not the employees are emotionally intelligent. This leads to another question: Can EI moderate interrelationships among motivation, creativity, and PIP?

This study is structured as follows: After this introduction, the theoretical framework that supports the research is discussed and the main hypotheses are presented. Next, the methodology used is described, including sample characteristics, variable measurement, and the main results obtained through the structural equations model. Finally, the main findings, conclusions, and practical implications are presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

One of the main theoretical frameworks that support this research is the theory of resources and capabilities (Barney, 1995; Elia *et al.*, 2021; Grant, 1991; Helfat *et al.*, 2023; Wright *et al.*, 2001). This theory explains how the influence of valuable resources and fundamentally intangible factors, such as the motivation of the members of companies, positively affects organizational outcomes.

The resource-based view is an enduring cornerstone of research in strategic management and continues to evolve in new directions; contexts; innovations (artificial intelligence and digitization, distributed organizations, stakeholders, and sustainability); and new concepts (resource redeployment, market-shaping through resources and capabilities, well-being, mental health, and EI in balancing personal and professional life). Further, new methods (text analysis and machine-learning, formal models, and policy-capture) (Helfat *et al.*, 2023; Kero and Bogale, 2023) are used in the resource-based view.

This study conducts a comprehensive review of the literature, tracing the origin of the resource-based view to the present to revitalize, update, and adapt the resource-based view, based on resources and capabilities, to our research model and its variables.

Although the resource-based view is a primary theoretical model, any analysis of the innovative activity of companies cannot be understood without resorting to other theoretical perspectives (Galende, 2006). The dynamic capacities approach is useful for analysing the capacities (EI) that through adequate combination and adaptation allow for the attainment of optimal results in terms of innovation (Ferreira *et al.*, 2020; Kero and Bogale, 2023; Majhi *et al.*, 2023; Taghizadeh *et al.*, 2024; Teece *et al.*, 1997).

Furthermore, the theory of behaviour (March and Simon, 1958) makes it possible to explain how the management of motivation directly affects individuals' behaviour and attitudes, which can lead to increases in creativity and innovation. Conversely, the ambidextrous organization approach supports the management of motivation based on its orientation (exploitation and/or exploration) for the development of various types of activities within companies (Jyoti and Choudhary, 2024). Finally, through the evolutionary theory of companies, it is possible to explain innovation processes from a dynamic perspective (Table 1).

Product Innovation. The broad concept of creative destruction, associated with 'doing things differently in the field of economic life' (Schumpeter, 1934), provides a general framework for understanding and defining innovation. The OECD[3] Oslo Manual 2018 considers innovation as any new or significantly improved technical change in products (and services).

From a narrow perspective, innovation is limited to technical changes and is regarded to be a solution to problems (March and Simon, 1958; Scarbrough *et al.*, 2015; Wang and Ahmed, 2002). However, more recent and broader perspectives of innovation understand it as a set of

[3] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

TABLE 1. THEORETICAL APPROACHES FOR THE STUDY OF MOTIVATION AND PRODUCT INNOVATION PERFORMANCE

APPROACH	OBJECTIVE	CHARACTERISTICS	VARIABLES	STUDIES
Resource-Based View	Innovation as a competitive advantage through employee motivation	Importance of innovation, human resources (motivation) and human capabilities	Motivation Creativity Emotional Intelligence Product Innovation Perfomance	Cohen and Levinthal (1990) Helfat *et al.* (2023)
Dynamic Capabilities View	Dynamic Human Capabilities as a source of competitive advantage	Importance of human capabilities in the development of innovation processes	Creativity Emotional Intelligence	Teece *et al.* (1997)
Behavior Theory	Decision-making of employees as a motivating tool in firms	Importance of decision making for the development of motivation	Motivation	March and Simon (1958)
Theory of Planned Behavior	Individual behavior from the perspective of psychology, and a central factor in thetheory is the intention of an individual to perform a given behavior	Importante of intention for the behavior	Motivation	Adams *et al.* (2009)
Ambidexterity Organizations	Ambidextrous motivation as a source of differentiation and innovation	Importance of ambidextrous motivation for the development of innovation	Motivation Intrinsic/Extrinsic	Rogan and Mors (2014); Kao and Chen (2016); Jyoti and Choudhary (2024)
Evolutionary Theory	The innovative process as a dynamic changing and evolving process that draws on internal and external resources	Importance of evolutionary resources in the innovative process	Product Innovation Performance	Watanabe *et al.* (2002)

Note: The table shows the main Theories Approach and the relationships with the model`s variables.

Source: Own elaboration.

skills or management systems capable of being reflected in final results and featuring some technical novelty and internal capabilities with the potential to affect innovation in companies (Cera *et al.*, 2024; Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Oslo Manual, 2018; Tian *et al.*, 2024).

Motivation. Motivation can be defined as the management of impulses, desires, demands, aspirations, and forces that encompass the psychic nature of individuals. There are various motives that drive people to activate and direct their behaviours. Motivation can be of two types – extrinsic and intrinsic (Osterloh and Frey, 2000). The management of extrinsic motivation focuses on meeting individuals' needs through external compensations (salaries, career

development plans, etc.). Intrinsic motivation management provides more direct satisfaction in two ways, namely, social and self-fulfilment (Cerasoli *et al.*, 2014; Gerhart and Fang, 2015; Nehra, 2023).

In the present study, we considered creativity and EI as factors that mediate the relationship between motivation and product innovation.

Creativity. Creativity can be defined as the generation of new ideas about practices, products, or processes that are useful to organizations for the development of new products or processes in the market (Zhou and Shalley, 2003). The present study analysed creativity (Heffernan *et al.*, 2016; Rhee and Choi, 2017; Torrance, 1974) and posits that creativity functions as an intervention mechanism between the variables of motivation and product innovation (Sujatha *et al.*, 2023). In this sense, creativity functions through an indirect effect that significantly mediates the relationship between both variables, as supported by evolutionary theory (Lange *et al.*, 2015; Teece *et al.*, 1997).

Additionally, if the generation of competitive advantage lies in the accumulation of resources and strategic capabilities that are imperfectly imitable by competitors (Barney, 1995), creativity meets the criteria to be considered a source of competitive advantage and, in this sense, a strategic factor for companies (Barney, 1995; Curado *et al.*, 2024; Gerhart and Fang, 2015; Grant, 1991).

Imperfect imitability refers to the difficulty that competitors face in duplicating a company's resources and capabilities to generate a competitive advantage such as creativity. Some resources and capabilities develop over time and are deeply tied to a company. These resources and capabilities include accumulated experiences, established relationships, evolved processes, and ideas.

Furthermore, when the links between resources and competitive advantages are not clear, it is difficult for competitors to understand exactly which elements they should imitate and how they should do so. This ambiguity makes it difficult to accurately replicate the source of competitive advantage. Some resources and capabilities, such as trust, teamwork, internal communication networks, and employees' internal interests and ideas, are embedded in the relationships and culture of an organization. These resources and capabilities are social factors that are extremely difficult to replicate as they are deeply embedded in an organization and its people (Barney, 1995).

Amabile and Pratt (2016) conducted an in-depth review of the creativity literature over the last 28 years, analysing, improving, and updating concepts, ideas, and associated premises. Their work focuses primarily on the individual-level psychological processes involved in creativity and highlights the influence of organizational work on those processes. Moreover, they introduced four new constructs into the creativity model: a sense of progress in creative idea development, the meaningfulness of the work to those carrying it out (intrinsic motivation), affect, and synergistic extrinsic motivation (Marino *et al.*, 2022).

Emotional intelligence. EI can be defined as the ability of individuals to recognize their feelings and emotions and those around them. Therefore, individuals with high EI will implement motivation management practices and have a greater impact on creativity and product innovation (Goleman, 1996; Lindebaum and Jordan, 2012; Matta *et al.*, 2014; Meisler, 2014; Santa *et al.*, 2023; Wright, 2014).

Several arguments can be used to explain the moderating role of EI on the relationship between motivation/creativity and product innovation. Individuals accumulate resources within organizations (stock) and have and can develop capacities (flows) that can further enhance

motivation and behaviours. It is thought that EI can enhance the effects of motivation on results in terms of creativity and, therefore, product innovation (Momm *et al.*, 2015). Consequently, organizations try to cultivate a company culture that promotes the development of their employees' capacities (Sung and Choi, 2014).

Therefore, if company employees have a certain level of EI, they will help their companies obtain competitive advantages, given their imperfect imitability (Alegre and Chiva, 2008; Amarakoon *et al.*, 2018; Nasir *et al.*, 2023; Ruiz-Palomino *et al.*, 2023).

2.1. Research Hypotheses

Muñoz-Pascual and Galende (2017) found that human resources such as knowledge, joint motivation, and relationships have a direct and positive influence on creativity and innovation (Bornay-Barrachina *et al.*, 2012; Paiva *et al.*, 2024; Torres-Moraga and Vidal-Buitano, 2022).

Intrinsic motivation can be managed among company employees (Schlechter *et al.*, 2015; Steele *et al.*, 2016). Extrinsic motivation is even easier to manage among them (Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016).

Most studies have jointly analysed the two types of motivation or given special relevance to extrinsic incentives (Sung *et al.*, 2017; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016). This research could help determine whether both are individually important for the development phase of new ideas or also for the development of new product innovations (Curado *et al.*, 2017; Muñoz-Pascual and Galende, 2017).

Authors such as Amabile (1998) and Schlechter *et al.* (2015) believe that both types of motivation are important (Cerasoli *et al.*, 2014) because there may be synergies between them that help in the generation of new ideas and innovation. Amabile (1998) argued that money, recognition, et cetera, increase self-esteem and, therefore, boost intrinsic motivation.

Some authors have suggested that intrinsic motivation is a key resource for the development of creativity and innovation (Meisler, 2014; Schoen, 2015; Wine *et al.*, 2012). Confidence, self-fulfilment, and a sense of accomplishment, et cetera can enhance individuals' creativity (Hewett and Conway, 2016; Paiva *et al.*, 2024; Tang *et al.*, 2017; Zhang *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. Intrinsic motivation positively affects creativity.

Other authors such as Amabile (1998), Schlechter *et al.* (2015), and Vidal-Salazar *et al.* (2016) have suggested that extrinsic motivation (i.e. motivation that is externally generated in individuals) can also be a source of new ideas and innovation outcomes. This is because once the members of organizations have their basic needs met, they can dedicate their efforts to intensely searching for new ideas (Malik *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2. Extrinsic motivation positively affects creativity.

The creativity of individuals (driven by motivation) can lead to new outcomes in product innovation (Frederiksen and Knudsen, 2017; Hunter *et al.*, 2007; Kwon *et al.*, 2015; Litchfield

et al., 2015). As previously mentioned, authors such as Amabile *et al.* (2007) stated that creativity can generate any type of technological innovation. Van de Ven (1986) pointed out that creativity is one of the factors that facilitate innovative processes. Therefore, we propose the following research hypothesis:

H3. Creativity positively affects product innovation.

Finally, creativity can be defined as the generation of original ideas in practices, products, services, and procedures that are new and useful for organizations (Tether, 2003; Zahra and George, 2002; Zhou and Shalley, 2003). Some authors (e.g. Torrance, 1974) have identified four characteristics of a creative person in an organization: fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality. Creativity is affected by motivation, among other practices (Sujatha *et al.*, 2023). However, very few authors have studied individual creativity (Caniëls *et al.*, 2014; Heffernan *et al.*, 2016). This paper, supported by the dynamic capacities approach, focuses exclusively on creativity. Therefore, this paper not only assesses direct effects but also indirect effects that could help understand the relationship between creativity, motivation, and innovation (Caniëls *et al.*, 2014; Heffernan *et al.*, 2016).

Regarding the possible direct relationships that can occur between both types of motivation and product innovation, some authors have been concerned with assessing motivation and monetary incentives (Huselid, 1995). However, they have not focused on intrinsic motivation.

Authors such as Wine *et al.* (2012), Meisler (2014), and Akgün *et al.* (2007) have argued that innovation must originate intrinsically in individuals, emphasising individuals' attributes or an organization's members' behaviour (personality, values, satisfaction, commitment, and personal objectives, etc.) (Camani, 2023; Carter *et al.*, 2021; Sarks, 2006) of the members of organizations.

Prajoso and Ahmed (2006) affirmed that internal stimuli could be managed toward innovative behaviours. Other authors, such as Aiman-Smith *et al.* (2005) stated that if individuals could make decisions and take risks within companies, they would be more motivated to innovate. Specifically, Cabello-Medina *et al.* (2006) indicated that commitment, involvement, and participation of members contribute to generating technological innovation and, to a greater extent, product innovation.

Recently, some authors have highlighted the role played by the internal behaviours of individuals in the development of any type of technological innovation (Chen *et al.*, 2004; Moon and Kym, 2006). Conversely, authors such as Huselid (1995), Un and Cuervo-Cazurra (2004), and Vidal-Salazar *et al.* (2016) have observed that economic rewards influence the will of individuals to generate new ideas and new products. Further, Hegde and Shapira (2007) pointed out that certain aspects of extrinsic motivation, such as career plans, promotion, job flexibility, and financial compensation help in the development of innovations. Specifically, Un and Cuervo-Cazurra (2004) indicated that compensation and salary levels positively influence product innovation. In this sense, Simon *et al.* (2003) stated that it is necessary to establish different systems of motivation and compensation for employees, depending on the type of work and the type of innovations they develop. Other authors, such as Lloréns *et al.* (2005), pointed out that the management of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation could influence the generation of product innovation. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H4. Intrinsic motivation positively affects product innovation.

H5. Extrinsic motivation positively affects product innovation.

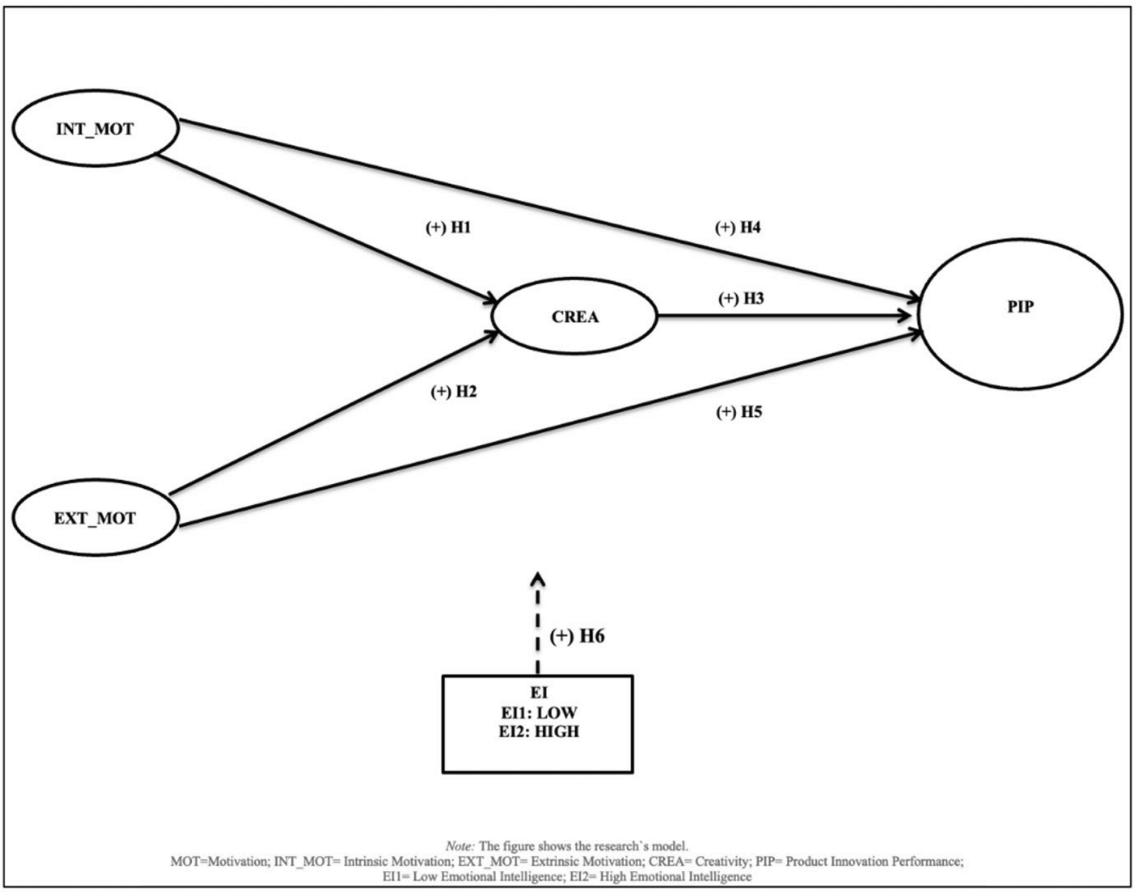
Van de Ven (1986) affirmed that the contexts, cultures, and human capacities supporting the attainment of innovative success are among the factors facilitating innovative processes. Specifically, Salman and Saives (2005) reported that human capacities could help achieve innovative success. Further, Akgün *et al.* (2007) found that the EI of individuals could positively influence technological innovation and, specifically, product innovation. High EI can help people elucidate their tastes and preferences and, consequently, be guided toward innovative processes (Hu and Kaplan, 2015; Santa *et al.*, 2023; Wilderom *et al.*, 2015).

Therefore, the following hypothesis concerning moderating relationship is proposed:

H6. EI has a moderating effect on the relationship between intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and creativity (H1 and H2), on the relationship between creativity and product innovation (H3), and the relationship between intrinsic/extrinsic motivation and product innovation (H4 and H5).

Figure 1 shows the proposed research model (Shalley *et al.*, 2004).

FIGURE 1. RESEARCH MODEL



Note: The figure shows the research`s model.
MOT=Motivation; INT_MOT= Intrinsic Motivation; EXT_MOT= Extrinsic Motivation; CREA= Creativity; PIP= Product Innovation Performance; EI1= Low Emotional Intelligence; EI2= High Emotional Intelligence

Source: Own elaboration.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

The hypotheses were tested through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The population under study comprised highly innovative Spanish companies that obtained aid from the Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) from 2017 to 2019 to finance research, development, and innovation (R&D&I) projects. Consequently, 1446 highly innovative Spanish companies from 14 economic sectors were assessed. Our analysis focused only on companies that had received financing from CDTI to carry out R&D&I projects.

Two hundred and forty-five valid questionnaires were obtained, representing a 16.94% response rate with a sampling error of +/- 5.71% at 95% confidence level. The questionnaires were administered online using the SurveyMonkey platform. The duration of the surveys was approximately 20 min, and the respondents were CEOs of organizations. The questionnaire was originally written in English, then translated into Spanish by a certified translator, and then back-translated into English. The questionnaire was highly comprehensive, providing specific, in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis to ensure robust insights, transparency, and reproducibility of the study.

Before the survey was designed, a pretest was done with five esteemed scholars and managers who helped draft the final version. Subsequently, firms were contacted via telephone to introduce the study, followed by a mass mailing of the survey. The respondents are the CEOs of each firm. CEOs were selected because they have a realistic view of motivation. Motivation management is a strategic aspect of creativity and PIP.

This study seeks to measure the impact of motivation on creativity and PIP. CEOs have to be consulted on employees' motivation, creativity, EI, and PIP from a management perspective. Because there are two types of variable analyses (perceptions about employees' motivation, EI, creativity, and organizational PIP), the most appropriate respondents are CEOs because they have insights into employees' inner lives, without being employees, and they know how their company is faring concerning PIPs. CEOs gave us a direct, realistic view of their employees and organizations. Furthermore, by indirectly asking CEOs about their employees' internal concerns, we guarantee real, objective, and unconditional answers (Crespo *et al.*, 2022; Inostroza *et al.*, 2023; Inostroza and Espinosa-Méndez, 2022; Wayne *et al.*, 1997). Our final sample of 245 highly innovative Spanish companies is composed of 14 industry categories (Table 2).

3.2. Sample Representativeness

Sample representativeness was assessed using two methods.

1. Sampling error: This metric calculated the deviation between the statistics derived from the sample and those from the population.
2. Analysis of variance (ANOVA): This analysis was performed to evaluate the occurrence of non-response bias, that is, significant differences between the companies that responded to the survey and those that did not (Armstrong and Overton, 1977).

A one-way ANOVA did not identify significant differences between early and late responses based on size and age. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states there are no differences between the mean number of employees (1672; $p = 0.199$) and ages of companies (0.041; $p = 0.840$) between the first 50 questionnaires received and the last 50 received was rejected. It may be concluded that there is no common method bias, and the sample suitably represents the population.

TABLE 2. PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

Sector Profile of the Sample	Number of highly innovative Spanish companies
Agriculture and livestock	4
Manufacturing	110
Power and gas supply	3
Water supply and pollution	3
Building	10
Vehicle trade and repair	27
Transport and storage	2
Catering	2
Information and communication	27
Housing	1
Scientific activities	47
Administrative activities	5
Health activities	3
Other services	1

Source: Own elaboration.

3.3. Measurement Assessment

This study is based on two types of measures:

1. Measures of CEOs' perceptions about employees: These measures relate to the motivation, EI, and creativity of company employees.
2. Measures at the organizational level related to product innovation.

These measures were used to assess the constructs to ensure consistency and were designed based on scales validated by literature (Table 3), depending on the type of the construct to be evaluated.

The CEO of each company responded to each part of the questionnaire. Notably, the measures above were carefully designed to evaluate the CEOs' perceptions or organization levels as appropriate.

Table 3 summarises the measurement scales used in the model.

As shown in Table 3, all the scales used were validated by the literature and adapted to our studies on the CEO's perceptions about the motivation, EI, and creativity of their employees. It should always be understood that all the scales are perceptual measures and that the answers could differ if employees were directly asked about their motivation, EI, or creativity. The objective of the present study was to evaluate these variables from an external and objective perspective, beyond the employee perspective which had been analysed in the first phase (Muñoz-Pascual and Galende, 2017).

CEOs have the management tools to transform people within organizations and it is vital to know not only the motivation, EI, or creativity of employees from their first-person perspective

but also the perspectives of their managers, who have to be fully aware of the conditions of the people within their organizations.

As shown in Table 3, the motivation variable has two factors: the first is extrinsic. To measure this factor, the measurement scale adapted to our study required CEOs to indicate their perceptions of their employees concerning aspects related to salaries, work–life balance, and promotions, among others. Therefore, this part of the measure did not assess CEOs' human resource management practices and what they do in their companies. Instead, the part assessed CEOs' perceptions of their employees' attitudes towards these factors. Although CEOs have direct knowledge about the human resource conditions and policies in their organizations, we attempted to adapt De Saá-Pérez and Díaz-Díaz's (2010) approach to our model.

The second factor of the motivation variable is related to intrinsic motivation. Our work adapted the strategic human resources practices framework proposed by Cheng and Huang (2009) to evaluate CEOs on aspects related to intrinsic motivation such as satisfaction, trust, and involvement of their employees. Based on this framework, CEOs can reveal the most intimate conditions of their employees from their (CEOs') perspective and undertake management measures directly related to human resource practices.

Regarding the creativity variable, this study adapted Torrance's (1974) measurement tool. This tool is based on the observation of creativity in various phases and makes assumptions of creativity on a direct individual level. Muñoz-Pascual and Galende (2017) made a direct application of this tool to employees, but the objective of the present study is to observe CEOs' perceptions of the creativity of their employees. In this sense, Torrance's (1974) measurement tool has been rigorously adapted to questions and items on perceptions of each phase.

Regarding the EI variable, Salovey *et al.*'s (1995) measurement tool was adopted to assess CEOs' perceptions of whether their employees have high or low EI. Similar to how employee creativity is measured through CEOs' perceptions, we adopted Salovey *et al.*'s (1995) test questions and items to evaluate CEOs' perceptions but retained the themes and items in the original test. Salovey *et al.*'s (1995) test has already undergone several adaptations and has even been translated into many languages. For example, Fernandez-Berrocal *et al.* (1998) made an important adaptation and summary by reducing the original scale from 48 items to 24 while maintaining its essence and thematic lines and translating it into Spanish. In our case, after an in-depth study to adapt the scale to the CEOs' perceptual measures, we retained the first phase (factor 1), that is, emotional attention, as a relevant and independent part to capture insights into how CEOs' perceive their employees' feelings, what affects or influences them, et cetera. Using a metaphor from medicine, this phase is akin to initial contact with a patient. In our model, the following phases (2 and 3) of Salovey *et al.*'s (1995) model could be merged into a single factor (2) because the clarity and repair phase pertain to the diagnosis and treatment of a patient.

In our case, we needed CEOs to have clear perceptions about how their employees feel and, secondly, about their employees' emotional vision (clarity) and mission (repair). In short, our phase 2 would correspond to the diagnosis and treatment phase which would include aspects such as knowing if the employees express themselves authentically and what affects them or if they know if their employees resort to support figures such as coaches, et cetera.

Finally, CEOs have the greatest knowledge about their organizations' innovation outcomes. CEOs rely on real measurements and organisational values (Cheng and Huang, 2009; Wang and Ahmed, 2002). In short, CEOs, whether merely perceptually or in reality, have the greatest and most objective knowledge about the conditions of their employees and organizations.

TABLE 3. ITEMS AND LOADING FACTORS

	Loading factor
Motivation (MOT) (V.E=65.67%)	
1 Factor: Extrinsic Motivation (EXT_MOT) (De Saá-Pérez and Díaz-Díaz, 2010) (α=0.85)	
EXT1_MOT. Wage	0.51
EXT2_MOT. Equal pay	0.61
EXT3_MOT. Individual compensation	0.77
EXT4_MOT. Group compensation	0.83
EXT5_MOT. Business compensation	0.81
EXT6_MOT. Job flexibility	0.53
EXT7_MOT. Conciliation	0.59
EXT8_MOT. Promotion	0.73
2 Factor: Intrinsic Motivation (INT_MOT) (Cheng and Huang, 2009) (α=0.94)	
INT9_MOT. Satisfaction	0.80
INT10_MOT. Engagement	0.90
INT11_MOT. Responsibility	0.86
INT12_MOT. Identification	0.90
INT13_MOT. Consideration with the problems	0.72
INT14_MOT. Trust	0.90
INT15_MOT. Implication	0.89
INT16_MOT. Self-realization	0.76
Creativity (CREA) (TTCT, Torrance, 1974)	
(V.E=75.09%); (α=0.94)	0.90
CREA1. Curiosity and pro-activity	0.92
CREA2. Ideas	0.88
CREA3. Various solutions	0.88
CREA4. Infrequent solutions	0.79
CREA5. Care, detail and production	0.85
CREA6. Spontaneity and improvisation	0.84
CREA7. Energy and vitality	
Product Innovation Performance (PIP) (Wang and Ahmed, 2002; Cheng and Huang, 2009)	
(V.E=73.69%); (α=0.68)	
PIP1. Number of innovation in product	0.78
PIP2. Sales of new product	0.82
PIP3. New Products comparison with portfolio products	0.75
Emotional Intelligence (IE) (TMMS, Salovey *et al.*, 1995) (V.E=74.79%)	
1 Factor: Attention (ATTEN) (α=0.92)	0.63
ATTEN_EI1. Attention to feelings	0.64
ATTEN_EI2. Talk and think about emotions	0.86
ATTEN_EI3. Emotional education	0.78
ATTEN_EI4. Influence of feelings	
2 Factor: Clarity and Repair (C&R) (α=0.94)	
C&R_EI5. Knowledge about how employee feel	0.78
C&R_EI6. Show feelings	0.81
C&R_EI7. Show emotions	0.81
C&R_EI8. Sentimental understanding	0.83
C&R_EI9. Optimism	0.77
C&R_EI10. Problems and difficulties	0.69
C&R_EI11. Emotional care of employees	0.71
C&R_EI12. Coach	0.84

Note: The table shows the main items and loading factors for scales. V.E=Variance explained; **α**= Cronbach's alpha; N=245.

Source: Own elaboration.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1. Structural Equation Modelling and Discussion

It was necessary to perform a series of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses with each construct (Hair *et al.*, 2004). The normality of the factors referring to the dependent variables was determined before the interpretation of the results. This approach ensured that the residuals of the relationships would meet the necessary assumptions. We assessed normality using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and obtained satisfactory results. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 4. All correlation coefficients were below 0.8; therefore, multicollinearity was unlikely to be a concern.

This model assessed the effect that ambidextrous management of motivation had on creativity and product innovation.

TABLE 4. CORRELATIONS MATRIX

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Intrinsic Motivation	1					
Extrinsic Motivation	0.366*	1				
Employee Creativity	0.558**	0.481	1			
Product Innovation Performance	0.452	0.185*	0.383**	1		
Clarity and Emotional Repair	0.040	0.380	0.418	0.160	1	
Emotional Attention	0.061*	0.591	0.494	0.000	0.440*	1

Note: The table shows the Correlations matrix between variables **=p<0.05; *=p<0.1; N=245.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 5 shows the results of the estimated structural model. As the table shows, the model reflected the direct effect of each type of motivation on product innovation and assessed the indirect effect that motivation would have on innovation based on the creativity of company employees. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation had a significant positive effect on creativity (with a confidence level greater than 99%). This result confirmed hypotheses H1 and H2. Additionally, creativity significantly explained the results of product innovation (with a confidence level greater than 99%). Therefore, hypothesis H3 was also confirmed.

The results indicate the intrinsic motivation of individuals was relevant to the direct development of product innovation. Therefore, hypothesis H4 was confirmed. Additionally, the development of intrinsic motivation led companies to obtain excellent results in terms of product innovation. Conversely, concerning extrinsic motivation, the results indicate the great importance that extrinsic motivation had in the development of product innovations. Hence, hypothesis H5 was also confirmed.

The general fit of the structural model proposed for the types of motivation, creativity, and product innovation was adequate. The χ^2 statistic was 1068.913 (degrees of freedom = 294; p = 0.000), and χ^2/df had a value of 3.636, which is not much greater than 3.0 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). The comparative fit index (CFI) was 0.851, and the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) coefficient was 0.835. These scores are close to 0.9, indicating a good fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.074, which is less than 0.08, indicating a good fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993). The model exhibited a satisfactory overall fit in its final result.

We conducted a multi-group analysis using structural equations to incorporate into the model the power that could be exercised by individuals who had strong emotional training, that is, individuals who knew how to channel, analyse, and transmit their emotions as a means to be successful in terms of creativity and product innovation. We thus made a distinction between collaborators who had a great capacity to detect and show their emotions (n = 136) and those who did not have this capacity well developed (n = 109). As can be observed, the presence of EI strengthened most relationships, which was particularly visible among companies with emotionally intelligent staff. Therefore, hypothesis H6 was largely fulfilled and partially confirmed (Table 5).

The general fit of the model with the inclusion of EI was also good. The χ^2 statistic was 1570.439 (degrees of freedom = 588; p = 0.000), and the χ^2/df ratio was 2.671, which lies between 0 and 3 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). The CFI was 0.890, and the TLI was 0.868. These scores are close to 0.9, indicating a good fit. The RMSEA was 0.083, a value close to 0.08 and, therefore, indicating a good fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993). Thus, the structural model incorporating motivation, creativity, product innovation, and EI exhibited a good overall fit in its final results.

Some authors such as Sung *et al.* (2017) have considered economic incentives and extrinsic motivation as sources of innovation within companies. The present study went one step further and examined the distinct roles played by the two major types of motivation among individuals within organizations. On the one hand, as expected, both types of motivation have

TABLE 5. STRUCTURAL MODEL FIT, RESEARCH HYPOTHESES, AND RESULTS

Model 1: MOT-CREA-PIP	Paths	Estimate	SE	CR	p-value	Results
H1 (+)	CREA ← INT_MOT	0.582	0.067	8.678	***	Supported
H2 (+)	CREA← EXT_MOT	0.369	0.048	7.622	***	Supported
H3 (+)	PIP ← CREA	0.565	0.125	4.521	***	Supported
H4 (+)	PIP ← INT_MOT	0.441	0.118	3.726	***	Supported
H5 (+)	PIP ← EXT_MOT	0.250	0.081	3.073	0.002**	Supported
Model 2: MOT-CREA-PIP (EI1=LOW)						
	CREA ← INT_MOT	0.669	0.109	6.135	***	Supported
	CREA← EXT_MOT	0.316	0.091	3.470	***	Supported
H6 (+)	PIP ← CREA	0.406	0.182	2.229	0.026**	Supported
	PIP ← INT_MOT	0.320	0.176	1.815	0.070*	Supported
	PIP ← EXT_MOT	0.015	0.118	0.127	0.899^{ns}	Not Supported
Model 3: MOT-CREA-PIP (EI2=HIGH)						
	CREA ← INT_MOT	0.587	0.111	5.290	***	Supported
	CREA← EXT_MOT	0.348	0.098	3.565	***	Supported
H6 (+)	PIP ← CREA	0.592	0.154	3.840	***	Supported
	PIP ← INT_MOT	0.362	0.173	2.091	0.036**	Supported
	PIP ← EXT_MOT	0.346	0.145	2.387	0.017**	Supported

Note: The table shows the main results of model. MOT=Motivation; INT_MOT= Intrinsic Motivation; EXT_MOT= Extrinsic Motivation; CREA= Creativity; PIP= Product Innovation Performance; SE=Standard Error; CR=Composite Reliability; ***=p<0.001; **=p<0.05; *=p<0.1; ns=Not Significant; EI1= Low Emotional Intelligence; EI2= High Emotional Intelligence; N=245.

Source: Own elaboration.

important effects on the development of creativity and product innovation. Individuals need certain external incentives (adequate remuneration, career development plan, job security, etc.) that will foster tranquillity and stability in a job position. This fact can help develop new ideas and carefully thought-out solutions within organizations. Nevertheless, it is necessary for employees to have high levels of trust, commitment, belonging, accomplishment, and achievement, that is, intrinsic motivation (Steele *et al.*, 2016).

Therefore, if companies are capable of establishing incentive systems and identifying the concerns or tastes of their employees, it will be easier to achieve the company objectives in terms of creativity and, consequently, in innovation, in this case – product innovation (Schlechter *et al.*, 2015; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016).

Additionally, in the proposed model, creativity had a direct and immediate effect on product innovation (Muñoz-Pascual and Galende, 2017). Therefore, motivation based on trust, satisfaction, or self-fulfilment, et cetera, is a key resource that companies can use to successfully achieve product innovation (Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016).

Authors such as Wine *et al.* (2012), Do Paco and Nave (2013), and Meisler (2014) argued that when individuals' qualifications are low, implying less responsibility and control over their tasks, extrinsic motivation might have a greater influence on the development of new ideas and innovation. Conversely, if employees have higher qualifications and responsibilities, intrinsic motivation influences creativity and innovation.

The results of the present study align with these observations. When the direct effect that extrinsic motivation has on product innovation was assessed, the effect of the intensity was less powerful. Therefore, it seems that the proper management of employees' intrinsic motivation can lead to successful innovation. Conversely, although the management and accumulation of extrinsic motivation are relevant in the development of new ideas within organizations and can be channelled into product innovations, the effect of extrinsic motivation loses power.

In conclusion, the study results indicate that the accumulation and ambidextrous management of motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) within organizations can lead to the creation of new ideas and the development of product innovation. At the first level, the direct relationships between the two types of motivation and creativity showed how both types of motivation were clear sources of new ideas (Schlechter *et al.*, 2015; Vidal-Salazar *et al.*, 2016). At the second level, the direct relationships between creativity and product innovation were also strongly supported. Additionally, the inclusion of a dynamic and changing concept within organizations, such as the EI of individuals, reflects how directors and managers should be aware that more than motivation management is needed.

Finally, to fully validate and understand the consistency of our results, it is important to note that the measurement scales of the variables motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic), creativity, and EI have been designed and adapted to measure the perceptions that CEOs have about these variables of their employees. Therefore, the results obtained, taking into account the measurement of the variables based on the CEOs' perception of their employees in terms of motivation, creativity, and EI combined with CEOs' real knowledge about PIP, provide a valid and consistent understanding of the tested model.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Firstly, we assessed motivation management from an ambidextrous perspective, distinguishing between the aspect focused on the development of individuals through exploration and the aspect oriented toward their development through exploitation. This distinction is a relevant contribution because these types of motivation can lead to different outcomes.

Secondly, we assessed the effect that an extraordinary ability – such as EI – can have on relationships, confirming its strong influence. This ability helps individuals reveal their emotions and appreciate those of others, allowing them to distinguish between their tastes and preferences.

Ultimately, the results suggest that intrinsic motivation is the most powerful force to generate new ideas and, consequently, achieve success in the launch of new products. The results indicate that extrinsic motivation is an important factor for generating new ideas but not for maximizing innovative success. Therefore, it can be concluded that the true driver of innovation in highly innovative Spanish companies is the behaviour, that is, innovation, of their employees.

Thus, this study makes a clear contribution to research in three areas: In response to the first research question, it seems that both types of motivation are relevant, hence they can generate new ideas. Further, the study presents creativity as a driver of PIP. Lastly, the results show that when a company has employees with high EI, the relationships between creativity and innovation are reinforced, while the direct effects between motivation and PIP are enhanced.

5.1. Managerial and Academic Contributions

It is necessary to determine which contribution may be more appropriate in each situation to promote innovative activity. In this sense, directors and managers should master the ambidextrous management of motivation, to determine exactly which one will lead to consistent innovative success. The present study will help directors and managers understand the importance of accumulating and managing extrinsic motivation—the most tangible and observable part of motivation. Extrinsic motivation is easier to observe, achieve, and implement among employees, takes a shorter time to implement, and has short-term results. Moreover, this study helps directors and managers perceive the importance of developing dynamic or intangible behaviours and capacities (i.e. intrinsic motivation), which stem from the strength and internal experience of individuals, serving as the cornerstone of long-term value creation.

One of the greatest problems managers face is activating intrinsic motivation among employees. Activating extrinsic motivation is very easy – everyone knows how to raise employees' salaries, give a couple of days off, and even give a 'pat on the back'; however, it is not so simple to make employees feel truly appreciated and a part of a project in which they can develop their professional careers and be satisfied. The present study posits that emotional management can be of great help. It can be observed how EI contributes to achieving extraordinary results in terms of innovation in highly innovative Spanish companies.

Directors and managers should be aware that all the resources and efforts expended for the development of creativity and EI of their employees are not an expense but a long-term investment. This investment should be made continuously if the former want the latter to enter a cycle of innovation, be a pioneer, and set trends within their field of activity or within the markets in which they operate. Directors and managers should pay special attention to the development of their employees' EI, allowing the former and the latter to show and express their feelings, tastes, and preferences and recognize those of others (Humphrey, 2012). If this outcome is achieved so that individuals arise who can easily show their emotions, feelings, tastes, and preferences, directors and managers will be able to channel and encourage this driving force toward obtaining the objectives and results of innovation (engagement) (Eldor and Harpaz, 2016; Momm *et al.*, 2015; Zhong *et al.*, 2016).

According to Gratton and Ghoshal (2003), human capital is composed of three dimensions: intellectual capital, emotional capital and social capital. This paper seeks causal relations to identify how motivation can be fostered. Hence, we posit that motivation is a cornerstone of

emotional capital to achieve creativity and PIP. Therefore, this study identifies two distinct types of motivation (emotional capital) as antecedents of creativity and PIP of a firm.

This paper broadens the present understanding of motivation, making several contributions. We identify two motivations that lead to creativity and PIP. Additionally, this study not only seeks PIP antecedents but also establishes causal configurations that can lead to creativity and PIP. Furthermore, the study answers the question: Can an employee's emotional level characteristics (low or high) facilitate creativity and PIP?

In short, this study allows CEOs and managers to gain insights into their employees' motivation, creativity, and EI vis-à-vis the development of product innovation. Furthermore, the study is done from a real and subjective perspective based on the perceptions of CEOs, enabling them to become personally aware and ensure their decisions regarding human resources management are aligned with their observations and knowledge. This outcome will be of great value to organizations since it is managers who analyse actual situations and direct them.

Finally, we present some practical recommendations and specific strategies that can be implemented by managers and members of organizations seeking to foster creativity and innovation among employees. For example, they can create a meaningful work environment, promote learning and personal development, recognize and value contributions, implement reward systems, set clear and measurable objectives, create internal competition, integrate both forms of motivation, avoid overdependence on extrinsic rewards, continually evaluate and adjust, provide adequate resources, and encourage collaboration and diversity.

In summary, the effective management of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is key to success in innovation and new product development. By creating a work environment that values and promotes both internal and external rewards, employers and managers can encourage their employees to be more creative and contribute ideas that drive a company's growth and competitiveness. Incorporating EI into motivation strategies can significantly enhance creativity and innovation. By recognizing and managing emotions, entrepreneurs and managers can create a more balanced and satisfying work environment, where employees feel intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to contribute new ideas and develop innovative products.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

Different sources of information (primary and secondary) were used, largely eliminating the risk of biases arising from the use of a single source (common method bias). However, some of the variables were based on perceptual measures, introducing a degree of subjectivity. Therefore, future studies can do data collection using two sets of participants, on the one hand, the directors and managers of companies, and, on the other, company employees (Lemmetty *et al.*, 2020).

Additionally, the study focused only on companies that had received financing from the CDTI to carry out R&D&I projects (highly innovative Spanish companies). It is, therefore, necessary to apply the study model to a range of companies that do not meet this criteria and other sectors and countries. Further research on a wider range of companies and some specific in-depth qualitative questions would enhance the transparency and reproducibility of the study.

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