

Research on the Influence Mechanism of Economic Income on Creativity

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Abstract

In recent years, research on creativity has received extensive attention, which individual traits or social situations are the influencing factors of creativity are worthy of further research. Based on the construal level theory, this paper deeply explores the influence mechanism of economic income on creativity and tests the mediating role of construal level. Finally, the results of this research provide inspiration for companies to take relevant measures to improve employee creativity.

Keywords

Economic Income; Creativity; Construal Level; Construal Level Theory.

1. Introduction

In recent years, research on creativity has received widespread attention from individuals, corporate organizations, and countries. Innovative thinking and the ability to generate novel ideas or products are crucial. For individuals, creativity can enable them to discover new things, seize opportunities, and solve daily problems more flexibly and efficiently. For organizations, new inventions and new methods are not only conducive to promoting the development of enterprises, urging them to adapt to the rapidly changing environment, and obtain core competitiveness in market competition. Creativity also promotes social progress in many fields. Different industries and jobs have different requirements for employees' creativity. For industries and positions with higher creativity requirements, employees need to be screened and guided in recruitment and job training to meet the needs of enterprises. Therefore, which individual traits or social situations are the influencing factors of creativity are worthy of further research.

Under normal circumstances, individuals with different economic income status are in different social status and resources, and the degree of dependence on others and social situations is also inconsistent, and the psychological distance is different. Based on the construal level theory, the distance of the psychological distance makes the construal level different. Abstract or concrete mental representations have a certain impact on individual creativity. Therefore, according to the construal level theory, this paper analyzes the influence of economic income on creativity, and examines the mediating role of the construal level, which has certain reference value in the research of creativity.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Creativity

In the past research, the definition of creativity has always been controversial. There are two opinions: process view and result view. The process view believes that creativity consists of different stages, which can be deconstructed into the stages of discovering problems, collecting information, generating ideas, and evaluating ideas. For example, Amabile (1983) defines

creativity as the sum of five aspects: task statement, activity preparation, idea generation, idea inspection and result evaluation. The result view often defines creativity as a product or idea with novelty and practicality, which has two dimensions: novelty and practicality. Novelty and practicality are regarded as the main indicators for judging the level of creativity. Novelty refers to creativity that has unexpected and different characteristics from traditional conventions, and practicality shows that creativity is really useful and conforms to realistic conditions and objective laws, rather than being groundless. In these two views, creativity is easier to understand and operate when it is seen as a result, so most scholars prefer the latter. And this article adopts the result view of creativity, and defines creativity as the ability to produce novel and practical products or ideas.

2.2. Construal Level

Regarding the research on the construal level, Gilovich and Kerry et al. (1993) proposed the theory of planning fallacy, which believed that people have more confidence in the completion of tasks for long-distance events. Liberman and Trope (1998) are based on the time construal theory, pointing out that time distance affects the degree of abstraction of an individual to an event, which in turn affects the individual's response to an event. Liberman and Trope (2003) distinguished the degree of cognitive schemata of information. They believed that the degree of schematization of information is higher, and the degree of abstraction is also higher, that is, the construal level is higher.

In summary, this paper believes that the construal level refers to the level of people's mental representation of a certain event. The individual's response to an event depends on its mental representation of the event, and the mental representation has a certain degree of difference. Individuals can have different levels of mental representations or construal levels for the same event. High-level construal representations are relatively abstract, relatively simple, target-related, de-contextualized, more structured, coherent and consistent, highlighting the primary and core features of things; low-level construal representations are relatively specific and more complex, unrelated to the goal, contextual, unstructured, and incoherent, highlight the secondary and superficial features of things.

2.3. Construal Level Theory

The core point of the construal level theory is that the way an individual represents an event will change as the psychological distance of the event changes. Some researchers believe that there are stable differences in construal levels between individuals, and the choice of abstract or specific representations is based on people's different habits (Vallacher & Wegner, 1989). Just like, different individuals have different ways of identifying the same behavior. For the behavior of "typing", some people are accustomed to describing it as "Clicking on the keyboard", while others are accustomed to describing it as "expressing thoughts." In the real situation, when an event is far away from the individual's psychological distance, the individual is more inclined to abstract representations of the event, showing a high construal level, paying more attention to the essential core features of the event, emphasizing goal orientation, and focusing on the final state of a thing; on the contrary, when an event is closer to the individual's psychological distance, the individual is more inclined to represent the event specifically, showing a low construal level, a secondary and superficial feature of the marginalization of things, paying more attention to the specific process of things.

3. Procedure

3.1. Economic Income and Creativity

Individuals with different economic income status have correspondingly different social classes and economic and social status to a certain extent. Generally speaking, those with higher

economic income have more resources and freedom, and are in an advantageous position compared with those with lower economic income. People with higher economic incomes have enough connections and resources, thinking they have certain superiority, do not want to be restricted by conditions, and have more independence and freedom. Therefore, those with higher incomes are more inclined to break the boundaries, which is conducive to generating novel ideas and promoting creativity. On the other hand, people with higher incomes prefer to take risks and are more tolerant of the uncertainty of the outcome, because they believe that they have sufficient resources to enable them to deal with ambiguous situations and bear the risk of uncertainty in the event. Encouraging adventure is also one of the means to promote creativity. Therefore, higher economic income is conducive to creative behavior.

3.2. Economic Income and Construal Level

The dominant position brought by high economic income will have an impact on the attention characteristics of individuals. High-income earners have more resources and show more independence and freedom, so they tend to be more goal-oriented and ignore information that is not related to the task. At the same time, people with higher economic incomes are less dependent on others or the environment, creating a sense of difference from others, adopting a longer perspective to recognize the information obtained, promoting the generation of abstract representations, and processing the information in an abstract manner (Overbeck & Park, 2006; Stevens & Fiske, 2000). Studies have confirmed that a good economic income makes people more free and independent, and less dependent on others, thus forming a self-focused social cognition and behavior model (Kraus MW, Piff PK, Keltner D, 2011). Compared with low-income earners, high-income earners have worse performance in recognizing and perceiving other people's emotions, and show a lower sense of identity and empathy with others (Kraus MW, Piff PK, Keltner D ,2009). At the same time, high-income earners are less willing to participate in social interactions (Kraus MW, Keltner D, 2009). For example, compared to groups with lower incomes, they are less willing to fill out questionnaires or use mobile phones to confirm communication messages . On this basis, high-income earners are more likely to feel different from others and have a stronger sense of psychological distance. According to the construal level theory, the psychological distance of high-income earners is farther, and the construal level is correspondingly higher.

3.3. The Mediating Role of Construal Level

Construal level refers to people's mental representations of events. High construal level is a relatively abstract mental representation, while low construal level is a more specific and detailed mental representation. Abstract thinking is more conducive to creativity, and the abstract interpretation of the problem can make different interpretations for creative tasks. In general, in concrete or partial thinking (low construal level), convergent thinking makes people pay more attention to details, thus narrowing the scope of information search (Friedman et al., 2003); on the contrary, in abstract thinking (high construal level), people can extend more space or transcend boundaries, and associate more useful information, so the thinking is more divergent and flexible, then new and practical ideas or products are produced. In addition, in terms of value preference, low construal level pay more attention to the feasibility of events, while high construal level pay more attention to the value and meaning of events, do not pay too much attention to the feasibility of tasks, and are more willing to take risks. Encouraging adventure is one of the means to promote creativity. Therefore, high construal level is more likely to promote creativity than low construal level.

In summary, compared with low-income earners, high-income earners have more resources, are more free and prefer to take risks, and promote creative behavior. Economic income is positively correlated with creativity. High income earners have a greater psychological distance and a correspondingly higher construal level. Economic income is positively correlated with

the construal level; high construal level is easier to promote creativity than low construal level, the construal level is positively correlated with creativity, and the construal level plays a mediating role between economic income and creativity.

4. Discussion

Starting from the construal level theory, this paper explores the mechanism of economic income on creativity and the mediating role of the construal level, broadens the application field of the construal level theory, and enriches the research on creativity. In addition, the research results of this paper provide some enlightenment for companies to take measures to enhance the creativity of employees, thereby strengthening the competitiveness of the company:

Increase the economic income of employees. In this study, it is proposed that economic income has a positive effect on employee creativity. The increase in the economic income of the employees enables them to have more resources than others in the same industry, and are in a certain degree of advantage, rely less on others and the society, to be more adventurous, and not to be constrained by details. Then they will have a higher level of creativity, produce more creative ideas and innovative products, and play a role in promoting the development of the enterprise.

Strengthen employee conceptual skills training. Strengthening conceptual skills training makes employees more aware of the company's history, culture and mission, use a longer perspective to recognize information, extend more space, stimulate employees' abstract thinking and overall thinking, thereby promote creativity, and enhance the company Competitiveness.

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