

Organizational Cultures Determine Employee Innovation in Response to Seasonality: Regulatory Processes of Openness and Resistance

Abstract

The existing literature on tourism seasonality focuses primarily on the causes and effects of seasonality and pays little attention to understanding of employees' reactions to off-season markets. Drawing from the approach-avoidance and regulatory focus theories, we examine the influence of three types of organizational cultures on employee innovative behavior. We also propose two regulatory processes that mediate those relationships: employee openness and resistance to change. Using multisource data from hotel employees and managers, our results indicate that employee openness positively mediates the relationships of innovative and collaborative cultures on employee innovation, whereas it negatively mediates the relationship between a traditional culture and innovative behavior. On the other hand, employee resistance to change positively mediates the association between a traditional culture and employee innovation, whereas it negatively mediates the relationships between innovative and collaborative cultures on employee innovation. We provide managerial implications and directions for future research in response to seasonality.

Keywords: tourism seasonality; organizational culture; innovative behavior; openness; resistance to change; regulatory focus theory.

Introduction

Seasonality is an inevitable issue in tourism and hospitality contexts, and it determines the transitory and seasonal phenomena as the industry experiences over- and under-utilization of resources resulted from seasonal variation (Martín et al., 2020). The seasonal changes in the market in turn influence the performance and productivity of tourism organizations. Currently, research on tourism seasonality has focused primarily on the causes and impacts of seasonal variation, using a one-size-fits-all approach (Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005). The causes of seasonality can be categorized into natural factors and institutional factors (Getz & Nilsson, 2004; Pegg et al., 2012; Turrion-Prats & Duro, 2017). Natural factors relate to climate and weather conditions, such as changes in temperature, rainfall, and sunlight that determine seasonal variations in tourist demand. Institutional factors, on the other hand, represent human activities and travel schedules that influence the seasonal flow of tourists and guests' intention to visit a destination, such as events and festivals, holidays, traditions, and traveling inertia.

Prior studies have argued about the positive and negative influences of seasonality in tourism. Having fewer tourists in the off-season minimizes overcrowding and promotes the sustainability of a destination and its surrounding facilities. However, from a commercial viewpoint, seasonality brings a plethora of challenges in terms of hotel occupancy, tourism receipts, and business activity and investment in general (Butler, 2001; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005; Pegg et al., 2012). Although organizations adopt different strategies to offset seasonal market challenges, such as coping, combating, and capitulation (Getz & Nilsson, 2004), little is known about employees' personal regulatory processes and their innovative behaviors, which have been significant, especially in their efforts to offset the seasonal shortage of demand. Without an understanding of individuals' regulatory processes and how innovative behaviors will be increased or decreased, tourism organizations' one-size-fits-all approach to the off-season

is questionable. Organizations rely on their employees for innovative behaviors that will generate new and useful ideas (Amabile, et al., 2004; Hon & Leung, 2011; Pizam, 2020) and will form the foundation for new products, services, or processes. Such innovation is crucial to offsetting the seasonal shortage of demand and to gain competitive advantage in the tourism market (Chen, 2011; Verreynne et al., 2019).

Moreover, organizational cultures can influence the interpretations of and reactions among employees who perform innovative behaviors in response to seasonality, but that relationship has received scant attention in the hospitality literature (Hon & Leung, 2011). However, an organization's culture by itself cannot determine employees' innovative behaviors, irrespective of the type and level of that culture, and employees' regulatory processes play a vital role in the workers' promotion or prevention foci for performing innovative behavior (Elliot, 2006; Higgins, 1997; Kim & Lee, 2013). Furthermore, researchers have repeatedly called for research to examine what kinds of organizational cultures lead to employee innovation, and whether employees respond similarly or differently, in terms of creativity, to the same cultural influences (Amabile et al., 2004; Zhou & George, 2001; Zhou & Shalley, 2008). Consequently, as a business strategy in response to the off-season in the hospitality industry, interest is growing for an examination of different types of organizational cultures and their effects on employee innovative behavior (Hon & Leung, 2011).

By integrating the theories of approach-avoidance and regulatory focus, we arrive at several research objectives. First, we examine how different organizational cultures (i.e., innovative, collaborative, and traditional cultures) influence employees' innovative behavior in response to the off-season. Second, we consider the role of employee openness as a generative regulatory process, and we consider resistance to change as an avoidance or preventive

regulatory process, in order to build an understanding of the associations between different cultures and employee innovative behaviors. Third, the majority of tourism seasonality studies have been conducted in the settings of developed countries (Banki et al., 2016; Chen & Pearce, 2012; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005), whereas this study contributes to our understanding of seasonality from the perspective of a developing-country setting in Ethiopia.

Our contributions are threefold. First, we move beyond investigating the causes and impacts of seasonality, and we identify employee innovation as an important business strategy for hospitality firms to use to offset seasonal shortages of demand. Second, we contribute by developing and testing the application of approach-avoidance and regulatory focus theories, via employee openness and resistance to change, to explain the relationships between different organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior. With that new understanding, we can answer hospitality managers' questions about why some employees behave innovatively and others avoid innovation. Third, we go beyond the existing research, which mostly has examined tourism seasonality in well-developed countries such as those in Europe and North America, and we join the relatively few who have examined seasonality in developing countries like those in Africa or Asia. Indeed, a considerable research gap exists in our understanding of the variations of seasonality in hospitality contexts, and that gap limits the generalizability and representativeness of the extant research on seasonality in tourism. Hence, this study further contributes to seasonality research as well as to the hospitality and management literature.

Theory and hypothesis development

Approach-avoidance and regulatory focus theories

The approach-avoidance motivation and the regulatory focus theory both address distinct human motivations in terms of valence, stimuli, and behavioral decision-making processes. According to Elliot (2006), approach-avoidance motivation is “the energization of behavior by,

or the direction of behavior toward a positive (approach motivation) stimuli (objects, events, possibilities), whereas avoidance motivation is defined as the energization of behavior by, or the direction of behavior away from, negative stimuli (objects, events, and possibilities)” (p. 112). Approach motivation represents the aspiration for positive stimuli or motives, while avoidance motivation represents negative stimuli or motives. The regulatory focus theory works closely with approach-avoidance motivation and elucidates how a person’s self-regulation is governed by positive or negative stimuli (Higgins, 1997, 1998). Regulatory foci can be categorized into promotion and prevention processes (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Higgins, 1997). A promotion focus indicates the seeking of pleasure, development, and excitement, and the ideal self leads it, which is consistent with approach motivation. In contrast, a prevention focus is on safety, protection, and obligations, is driven by the actual self, and is consistent with avoidance motivation.

Studies have noted that approach-avoidance motivation being integrated with promotion and prevention foci strategies (Scholer & Higgins, 2008). Therefore, we integrate the two theories by combining an approach motivation with a promotion focus and an avoidance motivation with a prevention focus, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the off-season market. Our combined theories imply that approach-promotion reveals individuals’ positive stimuli, and those stimuli lead to activation of further motive and action. Meanwhile, avoidance-prevention represents behavioral inhibitions that result in the prevention of losses and mistakes. We argue that employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season is sourced from an approach-promotion motivation or an avoidance-prevention motivation, and that such motivation further determines how the employees’ psychological intentions arise – an interchange that is also influenced by the types of organizational culture the employees’ experience.

Organizations intentionally establish different cultures to drive employees' motivation and behavior toward achieving organizational goals. Research has shown that innovative, collaborative, and traditional organizational cultures can influence employees to work creatively (Hon, Bloom, & Crant, 2014; Hon & Leung, 2011). Figure 1 presents a research model depicting the effects of the two regulatory mechanisms of employee openness and resistance to change, respectively representing approach-promotion and avoidance-prevention regulatory processes, on the relationships between three organizational cultures (innovative, collaborative, and traditional) and innovative behavior.

Insert Figure1 about here

The regulatory process of employee openness

Innovative culture and openness. An innovative culture is a business strategy that enables organizations to achieve success not only in product and service development, but also in exploring new markets and maintaining existing customers. In an environment with an innovative culture, employees are encouraged to experience new methods, and the culture enables them to take risks and to experience different work approaches with the intention of changing the status quo (Kofter, 2007). Thus, in an innovative cultural environment, employees tend to be more open to producing alternative marketing strategies to curb the off-season decline in demand. From the approach-avoidance and regulatory focus theories, employee openness, driven by approach motivation and promotion foci, is expected to lead to new ideas and unconventional working mechanisms. For example, Vaughn, Baumann, and Klemann (2008) found that people who were high in openness tended to follow promotion-related motives, while people who were low in openness tended to pursue prevention-related motives. Studies characterize openness as a person's intellectual, cultural, imaginative, and creative mentality

(Dollinger, Urban, & James, 2004), and it paves the way for the individual's eagerness for exploration and readiness to adapt to a new and changing environment (Makkonen, Williams & Habersetzer, 2018; Woo et al., 2014).

Although employees do not create their own cultural environment by themselves, they do have their own individual positive or negative motives and responses toward their environment. According to the approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theories, an innovative organizational culture encourages employees to work creatively and to move beyond conventional practices. In response to the off-season, employees will think and act in novel ways and will demonstrate new types of performance to offset the seasonal variation. An innovative culture stimulates the approach motivation of the employees who have a high degree of openness and a forward-thinking mindset, so that they produce innovative actions. According to regulatory focus theory, that approach motivation, driven by an innovative culture, fosters employees with a high degree of openness, and their openness influences their subsequent promotion focus process, causing them to seek excitement and pleasure from developing more innovative behaviors. This approach motivation process enhances high levels of openness in employees and leads them to adopt a promotion focus strategy in response to off-season markets. Thus, an innovative culture enhances employee innovative behavior via the employee openness regulatory process. We now have the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1₀: *Openness does not mediate the relationship between an innovative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

Hypothesis 1_a: *Openness mediates the relationship between an innovative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

Collaborative culture and openness. A collaborative organizational culture is also developed by organizations to drive employee innovative behavior. A collaborative culture

encourages mutualism and coordination among people, and it allows employees in an organization to work together as a team to achieve common goals (Barczak et al., 2010). Research has asserted that the success of a collaborative organizational culture is leveraged by employees' mutual interactions (Beyerlein et al., 2003; Nardi & Farrell, 2003), and their openness assists the organization's endeavors to create a supportive work culture (Barratt, 2004; Berman, & Korsten, 2014). Thus, the employees' openness propels an organization's efforts to foster a collaborative work environment. Furthermore, studies have found that attributes of employees' openness are associated with positive outcomes, such as positive work attitudes, knowledge sharing (Cabrera, Collins, & Salgado, 2006), verbal intelligence (DeYoung et al., 2014), social responsibility (Bellou, Stylos, & Rahimi, 2018), cultural adaptation (Kenesei & Stier, 2017), reduction of job burnout (Kim, Shin, & Umbreit, 2007), and increased intention to stay. Studies supported that collaborative culture positively related to employee's knowledge sharing and service innovation performance (e.g. Hu, Horng, & Sun, 2009; Hussain, Konar & Ali, 2016).

Openness and forward thinking are characterized as curiosity and eagerness, and employees with high levels of openness are motivated to interact with others and are willing to share their experiences in the workplace. In accord with approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theory, approach motivation and promotion strategies raise the likelihood of employees' intention to be open and ready the employees to forgo other employment opportunities and exchange their experiences with coworkers. In the off-season period, a collaborative culture facilitates the approach motivation of employees who have high levels of openness and leads them to exhibit innovative actions. Such an approach motivation, driven by a collaborative culture, further increases employees' regulatory promotion focus process and their

collaboration with others to generate more innovative behaviors. Hence, we expect that employee openness mediate the positive linkage between a collaborative culture and employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season. We propose the following hypothesis.

***Hypothesis 2₀:** Openness does not mediate the relationship between a collaborative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

***Hypothesis 2_a:** Openness mediates the relationship between a collaborative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

Traditional culture and openness. A traditional organizational culture is grounded in an established set of norms, customs, values, and traditions, in order to retain old practices and working procedures (Farh et al., 1997; Farh, Hackett, & Liang, 2007; Hon, Bloom, & Crant, 2014; Schwartz, 1992). A strict vertical chain of command, a rigid hierarchy, a high-power distance, and formalized rules and regulations, are the main aspects of a traditional culture. In such an environment, employees with high openness face challenges that arise from conservatism, the strict hierarchical structure, and individual risk aversion and that influence their opportunity to be innovative. Research has suggested that a traditional culture is negatively related to employee creativity (Hon, Bloom, & Crant, 2014) because a traditional culture restrains employees from moving further and instead pushes them to follow conventional forms of performance. Consistently with this, studies have argued that the relationship between employee openness and a traditional culture is negative (Gao & Shi, 2010; Ma, Qi, & Wang, 2008).

Because a traditional culture attempts to pursue old practices and leaves less room for exploration of new ideas and procedures, it works against any employees' openness that is

triggered by devotion and an eagerness to explore new working procedures. Furthermore, this incongruence between a traditional culture and employee openness will decrease employees' innovative behavior within organizations. According to approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theory, a traditional culture hinders employees' openness to working creatively because it triggers their avoidance motivation, and in response, they will adopt a regulatory prevention strategy toward the off-season. To avoid individual losses and mistakes, that avoidance-prevention process will decrease employees' willingness to perform innovative behaviors. Accordingly, we expect that employee openness negatively mediate the relationship between a traditional culture and employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season.

***Hypothesis 3₀:** Openness does not mediate the relationship between a traditional organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

***Hypothesis 3_a:** Openness mediates the relationship between a traditional organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

The regulatory process of employee resistance to change

Innovative culture and resistance. Resistance arises from psychological, situational, and dispositional traits that lead to individuals' intentions to oppose change and progressive actions, and in turn, those intentions obstruct employees from creating and implementing new ideas (Hon et al., 2014). An innovative organizational culture requires employees to explore new methods, even by taking risks at the workplace, and it counteracts employees' resistance. It is clear that innovation is associated with change, creativity, and moving beyond traditional practices (Dobni, 2008), and it encourages employees' intention to change the status quo. A study by Kauppila, Rajala, and Jyrämä (2010) supported the contention that salespersons became reluctant to sell new products as a result of their resistance to uncertain situations. Consistent with that, previous

studies found that employee resistance to change related negatively to an innovative environment (Heidenreich & Kraemer, 2016; Madrid-Guijarro, Garcia, & Van Auken, 2009) and stemmed from risk aversion and resistive behavior (Kumar & Raghavendran, 2015; Lundy & Morin, 2013; Madrid-Guijarro, Garcia, & Van Auken, 2009).

Because resistance to change is irreconcilable with an innovative culture, organizations can face baffling and recalcitrant situations created by resistance in their employees. In response to seasonality, employees may become resistive to utilizing new ways and alternative mechanisms, and they may even be opposed to addressing the off-season market challenges by employing innovative selling methods or processes. Thus, these employees will not exhibit innovative behaviors to curb off-season market challenges. Drawing from approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theory, we expect that employees with high resistance will be driven by avoidance motivation and hence will adopt a prevention strategy in response to off-season markets. As a result, in an attempt to avoid making errors and uncertainties, resistant employees will perform at low levels of innovative behavior. For such a situation, we examine the mediating role that employees' resistance to change has on the linkage between an innovative culture and employees' innovative behavior in response to the off-season. Consequently, we have the following hypothesis.

***Hypothesis 4₀:** Resistance does not mediate the relationship between an innovative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

***Hypothesis 4_a:** Resistance mediates the relationship between an innovative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

Collaborative culture and resistance. A collaborative organizational culture is principally based on the employees and thereby represents bottom-up organizational mechanics

and the maintenance of mutual interaction among employees in the workplace. By promoting best practices and learning, a collaborative culture intends primarily to promote the continuous sharing of ideas and cooperation, and it facilitates an arena of relationships and community belonging among an organization's members (Flores, 2004). Employees' resistance to change, however, hinders a collaborative organizational culture, because such resistance exhibits a low willingness to engage in a participatory work environment. Individuals who are high in resistance prefer to pursue routine tasks, and they show reticence, keep old habits, and exhibit rigidity toward cognition and emotional reactions. Hence, employees' resistance to change inhibits innovative behavior (Hon, Blom, & Crant, 2014).

From approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theory, employees' resistance behavior stems from a negative avoidance reaction to cultural situations, and such employees focus strongly on self-control by executing on their supervisors' trickle-down approaches and adopting a regulatory prevention strategy. Battistelli, Montani, and Odoardi (2013) asserted that job-related feedback compromises employees' dispositional resistance toward change. Research has noted that resistance can hamper the cooperative environment in an organization and can negatively affect employee creativity (Battistelli, Montaini, & Odoardi, 2013; Hon et al., 2014). Although it is believed that employee innovative behavior can be developed through collaboration (Emden, Calantone, & Droge, 2006), motives of resistance may inhibit workers from such cooperation in terms of knowledge sharing and skills exchange. In such a situation, resistance hinders not only the cooperative environment but also inhibits employees' cooperative efforts to develop new market approaches during the low season. Thus, we predict the following.

Hypothesis 5₀: *Resistance does not mediate the relationship between a collaborative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior, in response to off-season challenges.*

***Hypothesis 5_a:** Resistance mediates the relationship between a collaborative organizational culture and employee innovative behavior, in response to off-season challenges.*

Traditional culture and resistance. Unlike the cases with innovative and collaborative cultures, employee resistance reconciles with a traditional organizational culture because the traditional culture is grounded in a formalized work structure, and it promotes a safe and cautious attitude toward risks and uncertainties. According to Schwartz (1992), a traditional culture is associated with values and norms that demonstrate commitment and respect and that exhibit an inherited recognition of old beliefs and practices. A traditional culture exhibits a strict vertical chain of command, rigidity, and requirements of acceptance and commitment to superiors, and leads employees to pursue existing rules and prescribed code of conducts (Hon et al., 2014). In a traditional culture, the overall structure of the organization adheres to rules, regulations, and terms and conditions adopted from the past. Employees in this cultural environment strive to protect the firm's traditions and to preserve conservatism, and they tend toward defensiveness and resistance to new ways of doing things (Farh, Earley, & Lin, 1997; Leong & Chang, 2003). These organizations generally pursue a bureaucratic approach and a higher level of hierarchical structure and maintain coercive leadership, all of which are practices that dampen employees' inspiration to generate and implement novel ideas.

A traditional culture prefers to keep old practices rather than emerging applications and working styles (Farh et al., 1997; Leong & Chang, 2003), and employees become anxious of facing innovation because they associate it with risks and uncertainties. According to approach-avoidance motivation and regulatory focus theory, employees are motivated by taking an avoidance approach – they are against change, alteration, progress, and development, and they adopt a regulatory prevention strategy in response to the off-season market. Employees' resistive

behaviors are seen as being closely related to the traditional culture, and workers favor past thinking and practices (Erwin & Garman, 2010). Such an avoidance-prevention approach discourages any generation and application of innovative behaviors. Consequently, we propose that a traditional culture relates to employee innovative behavior via a regulatory resistance process.

***Hypothesis 6₀:** Resistance does not mediate the relationship between a traditional organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

***Hypothesis 6_a:** Resistance mediates the relationship between a traditional organizational culture and employee innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges.*

Research Methods

Sample and data collection procedures

A research team led by the first author collected data from employees and managers in hotels located in four different regions in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa, and Debrezeit. These cities have been recognized as having promising potential for tourism and hospitality markets. The survey questions were translated from English to Amharic (an official language in Ethiopia), and then two bilingual language experts checked the consistency of the translations. Full-time employees were invited to answer questions about their organizational cultures, the extent of their openness, and their resistance regulatory foci, while managers were invited to answer questions about their organizational cultures and their subordinates' innovative behavior.

Using convenience sampling, a pilot study was conducted first, with 40 employees and 10 managers, to evaluate the quality and readability of all question items. The research team first contacted human resource manager in each hotel to seek their voluntary participation in our

study and explain the research aimed to investigate the human resource practices for research purpose. With the help of HR managers, a paper-based questionnaire was distributed to employees and their supervisors or managers during working hours. To further alleviate social desirability issues, the research team was away from the data collection sites, and respondents answered the questions independently. Finally, the research team returned to each firm to collect the questionnaires, which were put into sealed envelopes to ensure confidentiality and privacy. We distributed 570 questionnaires in total from 48 hotels that ranged from 3-star to 5-star ratings. After deleting the missing cases, we ended with 479 valid samples for subsequent analysis (a response rate of 84%).

Measures

The questionnaire included the six major constructs proposed in Figure 1. A 7-point Likert scale was adopted for the respondents' answers, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Supervisors rated the employees' innovative behavior, while both the employees and the supervisors rated the three organizational cultures. An independent sample *t*-test to detect whether there were different perceptions between the employees and supervisors' responses.

Innovative culture. We used Zhou and George's (2001) four-item scale to measure the innovative organizational culture. Sample items were "Our company recognizes employees who utilize new thinking in their marketing tasks" and "In our company, leaders respect our innovative efforts." An independent sample *t*-test result confirmed that there was no significant difference between the employees' and supervisors' ratings on the innovative culture ($t = 0.24, p > .05$). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .89. AVE and composite reliability are .67 and .89.

Collaborative culture. We adopted a five-item scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1997) to measure the collaborative culture in organizations. Sample items were “In our company, we support each other when another colleague fails in his/her marketing task during the off-season,” and “In our company, we share our marketing experience with each other.” The results of an independent sample *t*-test showed that there was no significant difference between the employees’ and supervisors’ responses on this construct ($t = 0.19, p > .05$). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .91. AVE and composite reliability are .72 and .91.

Traditional culture. We used five items from Farh et al. (1997) to measure the traditional culture. Sample items were “We believe that managers’ decisions should be obeyed at all times,” and “We believe that to pursue a seniors’ track is the best way to avoid mistakes.” The results of an independent sample *t*-test confirmed that there was no significant difference between employees’ and managers’ perceptions ($t = 0.36, p > .05$). The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .87. AVE and composite reliability are .63 and .87.

Employee openness. We used a six-item scale developed by Miller, Johnson, and Grau (1994) to measure the extent of the employees’ openness. Sample items were “I look forward to the changes in my role that are brought by the implementation of work teams in response to the low season,” and “I perceive co-workers’ achievements as a positive implication to accomplishing my task.” The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .95. AVE and composite reliability are .71 and .95.

Employee resistance to change. We used a 15-item scale developed by Oreg (2006) to measure the extent of employee resistance to change. The scale was categorized into three dimensions: affective, behavioral, and cognitive resistance to change. The 15 questions drew from previous measures of dispositional resistance behavior used to gauge resistance to change

(Oreg, 2003), and we modified some of the scales in accordance with the seasonality context. Sample items were “I feel stressed having to follow new marketing tactics during the low season” and “I presented my objections toward new ways of marketing strategies that I have to follow.” The fit indices for the three first-order factors and one second-order factor fell within an acceptable range ($X^2 = 183.30$, $df = 86$, $TLI = .97$, $CFI = .97$, and $RMSEA = .049$). Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .96. AVE and composite reliability are .90 and .96.

Employee innovative behavior. We used a nine-item scale developed by Janssen (2000) to measure employee innovative behavior. Employees’ supervisors were invited to answer questions about their subordinates’ innovative behavior. Sample items were “He/She works to generate a genuine solution to attracting guests during the low season,” and “He/She intends to generate original solutions for problems.” The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .91. AVE and composite reliability are .54 and .91.

Control variables. Previous studies have suggested that demographic variables and personality affect individuals’ innovative behaviors and their intentions to reject or accept change (Zhou & George, 2001; Zhou & Shalley, 2008). Thus, we controlled for age, gender, education, and organizational tenure. In addition, we controlled for the length of the employee-supervisor relationship (Van Dam, Oreg, & Schyns, 2008). Last, we controlled for creative self-efficacy, because it is associated with innovative behavior (Tierney & Farmer, 2002).

Analytical strategy. We used the SPSS, structural equation modeling (SEM), and percentile bootstrapping analysis to test the data, and we applied Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) two-step analytical strategy. We used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the measurement model. Then, on the basis of our assessment of the validity and reliability of our model fit, we performed structural model analysis to examine the direct relationships among the

constructs. The results drawn from our measurements and the structural model were evaluated based on fit indices (Byrne, 2016). Finally, we did a percentile bootstrapping analysis with 10,000 replications, for a 95% confidence interval, to examine the mediating effects of employee openness and resistance to change on the relationships between organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior (Taylor et al., 2008).

Results

Descriptive statistics. In our sample, 52.8% of the overall respondents were female, and 27.7% were from 18 to 25 years old, 59.7% were between 26 and 35, and the rest were 36 to 45 or older. The majority of the respondents had a college or university level education (82.7%), and the rest had either a postgraduate education or a secondary or high school level of schooling. In terms of jobs, 73.3% were from hotel sales and marketing, 18.3% were airport agents, and 8.4% were from guest relations services. Regarding organizational tenure, 64.1% of the employees had from 1 to 3 years of work experience with the organization, 14.4% had from 4 to 7 years, and the rest had worked for the firm for 8 to 10 years or longer.

Correlations. Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of all of the constructs. As expected, employee openness was positively related to an innovative culture ($r = .49, p < .01$) and to a collaborative culture ($r = .38, p < .01$), and to employee innovative behavior ($r = .47, p < .01$), whereas openness was negatively related to a traditional culture ($r = -.35, p < .01$). Resistance to change was positively related to a traditional culture ($r = .30, p < .01$) but was negatively related to employee innovative behavior ($r = -.34, p < .01$), to a collaborative culture ($r = -.23, p < .01$), and to an innovative culture ($r = -.28, p < .01$). Employee innovative behavior was positively related to an innovative culture ($r = .40, p < .01$)

and to a collaborative culture ($r = .34, p < .01$), but it was negatively related to a traditional culture ($r = -.33, p < .01$).

Insert Table 1 about here

Measurement model. The factor loadings for all of the constructs including the second-order factors of employee resistance to change (affective, behavioral, and cognitive resistance) were higher than the cut-off point of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, the t -values were above the threshold of 1.96 with a 95 % confidence interval. The measurement model exhibits good fit indices ($\chi^2 = 1121.22, df = 881, p < .01, RMSEA = .024, GFI = .903, TLI = .98, CFI = .98$). To assess the discriminant validity, the proposed six-factor model was compared with the alternative models, which were a five-factor model and a one-factor model. The results indicate that the five-factor model resulted in an acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 2238.93, df = 889, p < .01, RMSEA = 0.05, GFI = 0.79, TLI = 0.89, CFI = 0.9$), but its chi-squared, TLI, and GFI values were poorer than those from the proposed six-factor model. Finally, we tested the one-factor model by merging all of the variables into a single grand latent factor. The results yielded a poorer fit ($\chi^2 = 10740.5, df = 899, p < .01, RMSEA = 0.15, GFI = 0.26, TLI = 0.28, CFI = 0.26$). Results indicated that the proposed six-factor model achieved convergent validity with an AVE greater than 0.5 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988), thereby indicating that the measurement items represented the intended constructs.

Tests of the mediating hypotheses

Figure 2 shows that both an innovative culture ($\beta = .37, p < .01$) and a collaborative culture ($\beta = .18, p < .01$) were positively related to employee openness, whereas a traditional culture was negatively related to employee openness ($\beta = -.14, p < .01$). Employee resistance to change was negatively related to an innovative culture ($\beta = -.16, p < .05$) and to a collaborative

culture ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$), whereas it was positively related to a traditional culture ($\beta = .19, p < .01$). Employee innovative behavior was positively and significantly related to openness ($\beta = .29, p < .01$), and it was negatively and significantly related to resistance to change ($\beta = -.16, p < .01$). Table 2 reveals that the hypothesized model was better than the alternative models, because the χ^2 statistics indicate that the discrepancy between Model 3 (hypothesized) and Model 4 (an alternative) was not significant ($\chi^2 = 27, n.s.$) (Byrne, 2010). Table 2 also shows that the structural model received acceptable fit indices ($\chi^2 = 1150.33, p < .001, df = 881, RMSEA = .024, CFI = .98, GFI = .90, TLI = .98$).

Insert Figure 2 about here

To test the mediating effects, we performed percentile bootstrapping by utilizing a 10,000-replication bootstrap sample with a 95% confidence interval to further examine the mediating effects of employee openness and resistance to change on the relationships between each of the three organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior (Taylor et al., 2008). Hayes's (2013) procedures were followed to examine the confidence interval for the lower and upper bounds, in order to assess whether the mediating effects of openness and resistance were significant. The results confirmed that openness had significant and positive mediating effects on the relationship between an innovative culture (indirect effect = .083, $p < .05$, 95% BCaCI (bias-corrected and accelerated confidence interval) [.040, .150]) and innovative behavior, and between a collaborative culture (indirect effect = .039, $p < .05$, 95% BCaCI [.016, .076]) and innovative behavior. Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, and the null Hypotheses 1₀ and 2₀ were rejected. In addition, openness negatively mediated the relationship between a traditional culture and employee innovative behavior (indirect effect = -.033, $p < .05$, 95% BCaCI [-.079, -

.005]). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was also supported, and the null Hypothesis 3_0 was, therefore, rejected.

Insert Table 2 about here

On the other hand, the results also supported that resistance to change had negative and significant mediating effects on the relationship between an innovative culture (indirect effect = -0.19, $p < .05$, 95% BCaCI [-.057, -.001]) and employee innovative behavior, and between a collaborative culture (indirect effect = - 0.14, $p < 0.05$, 95% BCaCI [-.044, -.001]) and innovative behavior. Thus, Hypotheses 4 and 5 were supported. The null Hypotheses 4_0 and 5_0 were, therefore, rejected. Finally, the results of bootstrap analysis also confirmed that employee resistance to change showed an inconsistent mediating effect (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007; Paulhus et al., 2004), in which adding resistance to change accelerated the negative impact of a traditional culture on innovative behavior (indirect effect = -.025, $p < .05$, 95 % BCaCI [-.057, -.003]). Thus, the mutual negative influences of a traditional culture and resistance to change further inhibited employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season. Hypothesis 6 was therefore supported. The null Hypothesis 6_0 was rejected.

Discussion and Conclusions

Theoretical implications

Coping with market inadequacy during off-season periods (Banki, Ismail, & Muhammad, 2016) and attempting to develop new markets and sustain existing ones are primary concerns for tourism and hotel enterprises. Although numerous studies have examined the push and pull factors that generate high and low seasonal demands for tourism products and services (see Amelung et al., 2007; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005; Senbeto & Hon, 2019), a number of

issues related to the underlying mechanisms contribute to the cause and impact, and how tourism organizations can alleviate the issues of seasonality. The search for solutions still poses thought-provoking questions in the hospitality industry (Connell et al., 2015; Goulding, Baum, & Morrison, 2005; Koenig & Bischoff, 2010). Moreover, existing studies of tourism seasonality have mainly focused on aggregate demand and supply from the Western perspective, but economic and climatic variations are different in non-Western societies. Thus, a comprehensive seasonality study to understand the theoretical and practical gaps associated with the features of seasonality in tourism from non-Western perspectives is necessary (Baum & Lundtorp, 2001; Chen & Pearce, 2012; Koenig & Bischoff, 2005). To fill this gap, the current study incorporated approach-avoidance motivation theory and regulatory focus theory to examine the influence of organizational cultures on employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season.

Previous studies have paid considerable attention to macro-level aspects of seasonality and have devoted little attention to the micro level – that is, to the perspectives of individual employees in response to seasonality (Goulding et al., 2005). The present study investigates two underlying regulatory mechanisms – employee openness as an approach-promotion focus, and resistance to change as an avoidance-prevention focus – on the relationships between the three primary types of organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season in hospitality industry. Furthermore, tourism researchers (Liu & Wall, 2006) have emphasized that inadequate attention has been given to human resource development in the tourism industry, especially in developing countries. Other studies have supported the concept that seasonality in tourism is less known in the context of developing countries (e.g., Banki et al., 2016; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005; Chen & Pearce, 2012). We do know that organizations in developing countries in places such as Africa rely strongly on employee innovative behavior to

help them develop their hospitality markets and improve their service quality, in efforts to offset seasonal shortages of demand. Thus, our study responds to the call for conducting seasonality research in developing-country settings.

Furthermore, the existing seasonality research has mainly focused on qualitative or case-based studies, with a limited understanding in terms of theoretical and conceptual development (see Chen & Pearce, 2012; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005). Our research model expands that understanding by using approach-avoidance motivation theory and regulatory focus theory to assist in inferring testable hypotheses on the relationships of organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior in response to seasonality. We also provide answers to help solve the parallel questions of when do hotels' different cultures influence employee innovative behaviors in response to seasonality, and why do some employees perform innovative behavior, as a generative response, whereas others avoid it, as a resistance response. Our findings show that organizational cultures, which firms intentionally establish to achieve their business goals, can cause employees to be stimulated by approach or avoidance motivation, and to adopt either a promotion focus strategy or a prevention focus strategy toward their organization's culture. These regulatory focus mechanisms can further promote or prevent employee innovative behavior in response to the off-season. Hence, this study offers mutual benefits to the hotel, tourism, marketing, and management fields to help them deal with seasonal market variation in a non-Western developing country setting.

Practical implications

The present study offers a number of practical implications to the literature on seasonality, especially as it apply to the hospitality and tourism industries. First, this study's

findings have implications for human resources, hotel management practices, and marketing strategies in a developing country, Ethiopia. For human resource managers and tourism practitioners, our results indicated those potential employees' inclinations for and compatibility with a hotel's organizational culture is important to know at the time of job recruitment and selection. For example, employees who exhibit openness are compatible with innovative and collaborative organizational cultures because they are more willing to develop, collaborate on, and exchange ideas with others. In contrast, employees who resist change do not do well in an innovative culture, and instead are most comfortable with a traditional cultural environment. Thus, measuring potential employees' attitudes and developing an understanding of their personal needs and psychological behaviors is an important task for managers and practitioners during employee recruitment and selection, as well as during worker training and development processes, in order to assess and capitalize on the compatibility between the organization's business plan and employees' acceptance levels.

Second, tourism organizations should be aware that the three different types of organizational cultures are not equally effective in fostering innovative behaviors in employees. When employees possess a high level of openness, they react positively to innovative and collaborative organizational cultures and have a strong motivation for an approach and promotion focus that in turn will enhance innovative behavior. To the contrary, when employees have a high degree of resistance, they react most positively to a traditional organizational culture and have a strong motivation toward an avoidance and prevention focus, which in turn leads them to perform at a low level of innovative behavior. This implication is particularly relevant to multinational hospitality firms that operate in different countries and thus have employees with varying regulatory foci.

Third, with the effect of seasonality and its consequent off-season market-related challenges, marketers need to consider strategies that assist them in managing during seasonal variation, and they are wise to identify guests' and tourists' seasonal variation patterns. In addition, marketers could consider the current research framework and apply our findings in their business strategy to manage seasonal variation as well as to identify international tourists' and hotel guests' seasonal variation. In relation to this, the findings show that innovative, collaborative, and open environments have a higher possibility for marketing activities such as promotions, advertisement, and publicity to address off-season market challenges. In relation to that endeavor, this study suggests that innovative and collaborative organizational cultures and an open environment have a high proclivity for marketing activities, such as promotions, advertisement, and publicity, to address off-season market challenges. This study can provide input for policymakers in creating plans and business strategies to address seasonality from micro and macro perspectives.

Fourth, tourism managers need to support their employees in their endeavor to address off-season market through high proclivity for marketing activities and customer satisfaction in time of off-season. For example, Alananzeh, Mahmoud, and Ahmed (2015) found that high seasonality has several consequences on hotel employees regarding miscommunication, deviance, negative relationship, and conflict with coworkers during work hours. Innovative behavior assists employees to understand and predict the extent of seasonal variation and showed readiness to assist organization's effort to curb off-season. In response to such outcome of seasonality, employee innovative behavior assists them to be aware of the variation on customer demand, to build up psychological remedies, and to confront with several working mechanisms. In such vein, examples of employee innovative behavior in response to off-season includes

familiarization with marketing mechanisms, addressing non-peak season market demand, suggesting and facilitating alternative ways to ensure organizations' objectives.

Furthermore, in combating resistance, managers need to communicate about their proposed marketing mechanisms in considering employees' awareness and organizations' characteristics and past performance. In addition, it is preferable to support employees endeavor to express their thoughts by enhancing collaborative work environment in which employees could share their feelings and thoughts. Most importantly, to cope with employees' resistance behavior, managers need to understand when change is compulsory to impede off-season market challenges by understanding a performance gap exists which then deteriorate response to challenges like seasonality. Fostering collaborative work culture can be better strategy to minimize resistance and to uphold openness, by enhancing interaction among co-workers, reward, promotional strategies, appreciate ways of motivation, idea generation, and application. Motivating employees and creating a comfortable atmosphere to express what they think is a better means to embolden inspiration as it helps to curb seasonality in an innovative and collaborative way.

Lastly, based on our findings, prospective investors who may want to develop new markets in other cultural settings, first by guiding them in investigating the effects of seasonality on their upcoming hotel business, and second by providing specific information related to seasonality that can be helpful during preparation and actualization of hotel investment in developing countries and in different cultural settings.

Limitations and directions for future research

This study had several limitations. Although it adopted multi-source samples for our survey, obtained from both employees and managers, the research design was cross-sectional and therefore may not be able to solve the causality issue. Also, this study adopted a non-probability sampling method to collect the data. We suggest that future studies examine the evolutionary relationships and developmental patterns among organizational cultures, employees' regulatory processes, and employee innovative behavior, in the context of seasonality. In addition, future research is needed in order to replicate our findings, using a probability sampling method, and in different cultural settings and in other developing countries. We recommend that similar studies be conducted within segments of tourism organizations, such as with travel agents or tour operations and destination management organizations, to validate this study's finding in wider tourism and hospitality contexts. For example, additional empirical studies are necessary in order to assess the roles of respondents in managing seasonality in different market destinations and tourism organizations in developing countries.

Moreover, to ensure the generalizability of our findings, we first suggest further exploration of different aspects of innovation, such as in various markets, services, products, processes, and technologies. For example, a future study using a holistic approach toward innovation with regard to seasonality is necessary. Second, we recommend field experiments that could be applicable to examine other mediating effects, such as the effects of efficacy (Michael, Hou, & Fan, 2011), leadership (Pieterse et al., 2010), and supervisory or organizational support (Janssen, 2005), on the relationship between organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior. Finally, we believe that future studies should combine a qualitative approach and on-site observation methods in order to explore macro-level perspectives of seasonality, using data from senior managers, tourists, and/or customers. Mixed research methods with a combination of

constructivism and positivism, or post-positivism, should provide another direction for seasonality research.

In summary, although seasonality is not a new topic in the tourism literature, it has been discussed from a one-size-fits-all approach. Unfortunately, that approach has many limitations in terms of conceptual and theoretical development, especially relating to the question of how tourism organizations can solve the issues of the off-season in a competitive market. Drawing upon approach-avoidance motivation theory and regulatory focus theory, this study examines the influence that the three primary types of organizational culture – innovative, collaborative, and traditional cultures – exert on employee innovative behavior via the regulatory mechanisms of employee openness and resistance to change. Our findings indicate that high levels of employee openness in conjunction with innovative and collaborative cultures foster innovative behavior and accelerate positive reactions to curb off-season problems. In contrast, employees' resistance to change, in conjunction with a traditional culture that is associated with avoidance motives and prevention strategies, causes them to perform at a low level of innovative behavior in response to off-season challenges. Our empirical findings contribute to the industry's knowledge about tourism seasonality and hospitality management in the context of developing countries.

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Figure 1
Proposed model of organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior in response to seasonality

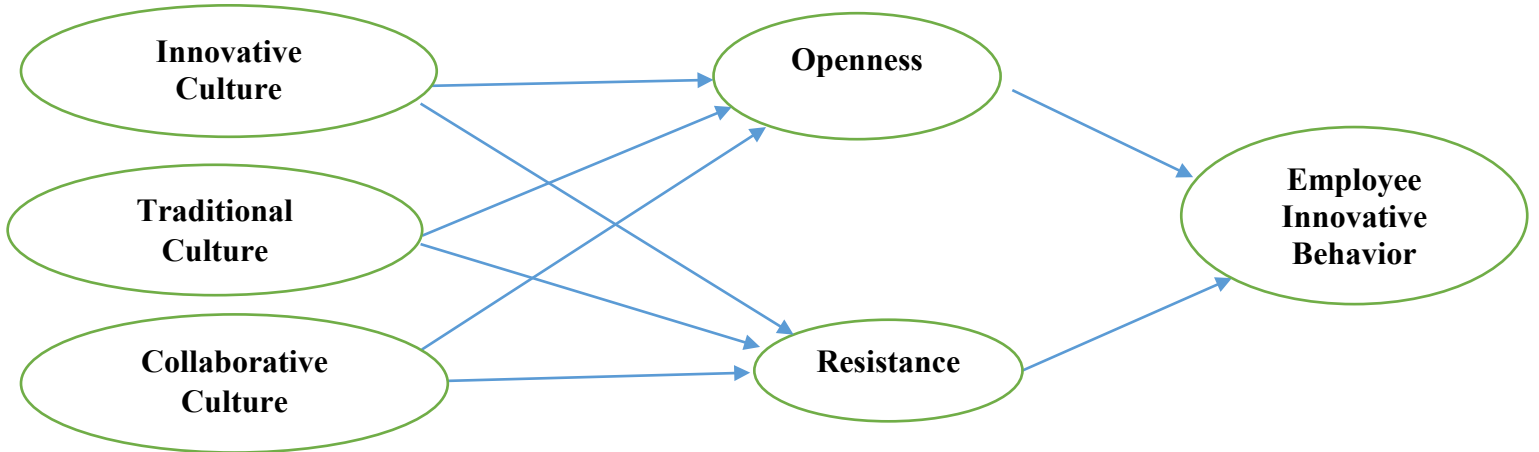


Figure 2
Proposed model of organizational cultures and employee innovative behavior in response to seasonality

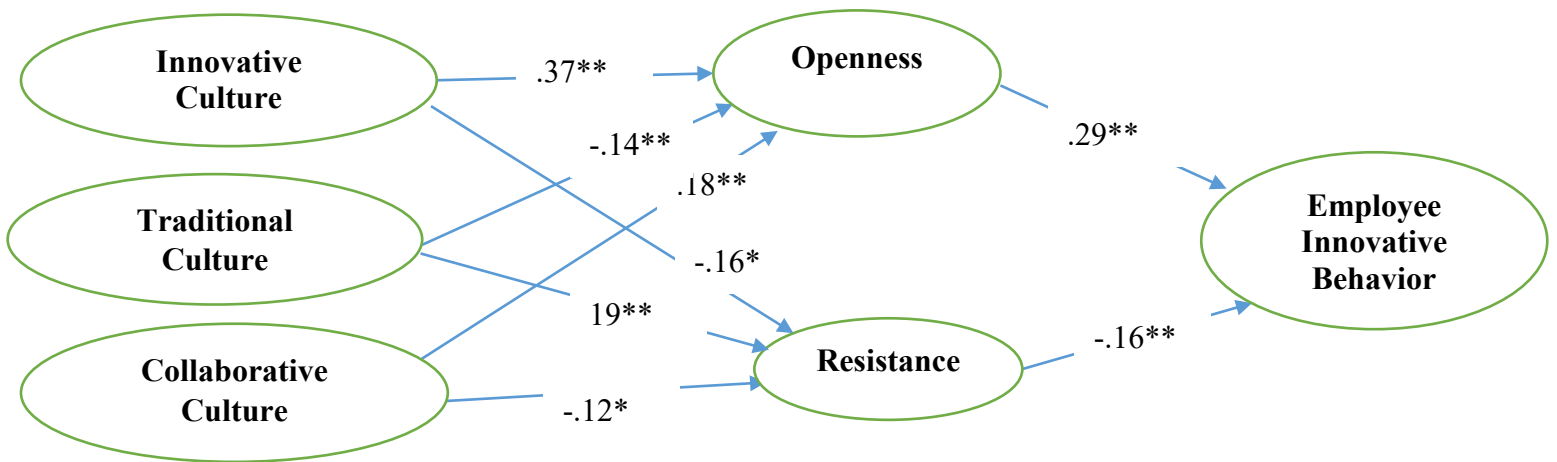


Table 1
Mean, Standard Deviations and Correlations of variables

Variable	Mean	SD	IC	TC	CC	OP	RES	EIB
1. Innovative culture	4.91	1.51	-					
2. Traditional culture	2.96	1.36	-.47**	-				
3. Collaborative culture	4.93	1.47	.44**	-.28**	-			
4. Openness	5.46	1.24	.49**	-.35**	.38**	-		
5. Resistance to change	2.44	1.22	-.28**	.30**	-.23**	-.38**	-	
6. Employee innovative behavior	5.43	1.10	.40**	-.33**	.34**	.47**	-.34**	-

Note. SD – Standard deviation; IC - Innovative culture; TC - Traditional culture; CC - Collaborative culture; OP - Openness; RES - Resistance; EIB - Employee innovative behavior

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

Table 2
Summary of Model Fit Indices

Model Test	χ^2	df	CFI	GFI	TLI	RMSEA
1. Independent model	14348.18	946				
2. Measurement model	1121.22	881	.98	.90	.97	.024
3. Hypothesized model (Figure 1)	1150.33	881	.98	.90	.97	.025
4. Alternative model: additional direct paths from innovative, traditional, and collaborative cultures to employee innovative behavior	1177.11	885	.97	.89	.97	.027

χ^2 values for the measurement and structural models are significant at $p < .01$.